

A SENSE OF BELONGING: A MODEL FOR CHURCH
LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT UTILIZING
FIVE-FOLD MINISTRY GIFTS

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ABSTRACT

A SENSE OF BELONGING: A MODEL FOR CHURCH LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT UTILIZING FIVE-FOLD MINISTRY GIFTS

by
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The context is New Beginnings Fellowship Church in Indianapolis, Indiana. The problem is that ministry leaders do not have a sense of belonging in the body of Christ. The project consisted of six sessions to educate participants on their identity in Christ and identify spiritual gifts. The ministry model included Bible study, assessments, breakout sessions and journaling. The hypothesis is that if church leaders become aware of belonging in Christ, they will be unified, spiritually mature, and obtain necessary tools for their God-given purposes. As a result, members will discover their gifts and assist in building up the kingdom.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I want to give all honor and praises to God who has been my Savior, my helper, my guide, my keeper and my strength. It is through Him that I live, move and have my being. I thank God for allowing me to experience this incredible journey and for giving me the inspiration for this project.

To Rev. Dr. James A. Jackson Sr. and Lady Tara Jackson for all your love, kindness and support. Thank you for trusting in my gifts to serve our New Beginnings Fellowship church family and community. To Elder Elwood Reams and Tracey Bush for all your scholarly assistance and encouragement. To my mentors, cohort and editor, thank you for believing in me when at times I did not believe in myself. I want praise God for all my professional and context associates for enduring to the end with me. I appreciate you all. To my New Beginnings Fellowship Church Family, thank you for your prayers and encouragement throughout these three years. You all are a blessing to me.

DEDICATION

To my mother, Rev. Gloria Bradford Ellis and father, the late Alex “Boo” Ellis, for being my greatest cheerleaders and teaching me to fulfill the meaning of my name, “Helper of Mankind.” To my late grandparents, Rev. Willie Bradford, Sr. and Bernice Bradford, thank you for role modeling what Christian ministry looks like, serving God’s people in love.

I dedicate this project to all the women who have gone before me in ministry. Thank you for paving the way. I stand on your shoulders.

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INTRODUCTION

New Beginnings Fellowship Church is a fifteen-year-old congregation, located on the eastside of Indianapolis, Indiana. The church is a thriving church with four services on Sundays and two locations. Despite the wonderful successes of the church, some ministers and ministry leaders struggle with a sense of belonging within the church. This is an issue rooted in the history of the context and in my personal experience. As a result, a few leaders and ministers have become frustrated in finding their places in the church because they feel overlooked and alienated. Many times, the frustration results in disharmony, distrust and resentment among leaders. Intentional spiritual and practical development of ministers and ministry leaders shapes this project. To address this problem, I implemented a six-session leadership development model that will help pastors, ministers, and ministry leaders increase their awareness of what it means to belong in Christ.

Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines awareness as the quality or a state of being aware, knowledge and understanding that something is happening or exists.¹ Followers of Christ must know and understand their belonging in Him if they are going to fulfill their purpose as His disciples and part of His church. They must also be aware that the spiritual goal is not to strive for a platform or a title; but it is to serve. Also, the Apostle

¹ Merriam-Webster Dictionary, s.v. "Awareness," accessed January 20, 2020, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/awareness>.

Paul in Ephesians 4:12-13 teaches that goal for followers of Christ is, “to equip the saints for works of ministry, to build up the body of Christ, until we all reach unity in the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God, as we mature to the full measure of the stature of Christ.” When believers truly understand their relationship to Jesus Christ, their awareness increases and leads them to the revelation that the highest honor includes belonging to God in Christ, which provides Christians their identity. True Christian identity is more than reciting facts and figures in the Bible but also encompasses how one views God and God's promises, and how one views one's relationship with Jesus Christ. This identity also impacts how one views oneself, one's understanding of the local church, and how one views one's relationship with others and the world.

In this research, a church leadership development model was formed through the foundation that was built from scripture, history, theology and interdisciplinary engagement. In chapter two, the biblical foundational text for this project is Ephesians 4:7-13. It reads:

But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift. Therefore, it says, “When He ascended on high, He led captive a host of captives, And He gave gifts to men.” (Now this expression, “He ascended,” what does it mean except that He also had descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is Himself also He who ascended far above all the heavens, so that He might fill all things.) The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ (Eph. 4:7-13).

This text was considered for the examination of helping to substantiate the argument for leadership development in awareness of belonging in Christ. In this passage, Paul shares the organization and the administration of the early Church. He also explains the purpose of leadership and lay members and how the early Church was to define themselves and

carry out responsibilities as followers of Christ. Its aides in answering the following questions. What is the relationship between Christ and the Body of Christ? What difference does it make to be aware of this relationship in the lives of Christians? How does one activate the Body of Christ to accomplish its purpose?

The biblical foundation account was helpful in highlighting that the Spirit of God brings about a oneness that transcends differences such as race, religion, cultures, ethnicity, gender, economic and educational status while embracing diversity. An awareness of a sense of belonging in Christ helps Christians respond to their calling. In Christ, they receive the fullness of the Holy Spirit on their lives. The Holy Spirit, in turn, brings unity with each believer because of their connection to God to whom they have all access. Through this, the church can grow and make disciples.

Christians must be aware of their sense of belonging. Christians are a part of the body of Christ and Jesus Christ is the head of the body. He is in charge and Christ is both the goal and the source for Christian growth. Apart from Christ a Christian is unable to accomplish anything.

In chapter three, the research focuses on the historically lens to explore the autobiography of St. Augustine of Hippo and the Grimke Sisters. All three of these pioneers in the faith struggled to belong in society. Through their autobiographies, I learned how their search for wisdom and purpose in life brought them to an awareness of who they were in Christ. Their newly found self-awareness created a desire for a deeper relationship with God, revealing their spiritual gifts that were designed to serve others. This newly discovered, God-given calling ignited a high level of spiritual passion for discovering God's will and purpose for each of their lives. Before their revelation of

their respective purposes, their lives were full of frustration and dissatisfaction. Walking in their calling brought them fulfillment, self-gratification, a connection to the community of God, and glory to God.

The learning from St. Augustine, Angelina, and Sarah Grimke provided an enhanced understanding that awareness in Christ is key to their relationship with God. They all articulated a path of discovery resulting in their awareness of the power of belonging in the family of God. Through their lives, Christ revealed to them their intrinsic worth, and a profound understanding that they were not bound by the social, economic, cultural, or gender restraints that society had constructed. Their awareness of belonging in Christ gave them the freedom that empowered them to find out who they were and what they were living for. They also came to understand the importance of being God's instruments to do His work and speak out for God despite opposition.

Chapter four engages the reader in the theological foundation. It explored the systematic theology of Christology and ecclesiology. To understand Christ and how Christians belong in Christ requires investigating Christology. According to Stanley J. Grenz, "Christology is the study of the identity and mission of Christ whom Christians proclaim is Jesus of Nazareth. In Jesus, Christians find the self-revelation of God-God incarnate- and God acting definitively for the salvation of humankind."² The chapter emphasized how Jesus Christ redeemed humankind. Redeemed means to buy back or reclaim as one's own. Humankind owed a debt so deep and was in a place so low that the only way to get out of it was through slavery, bondage or even death. God saw humankind's condition and God loved God's creation so much that God did not want

² Stanley J. Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God* (Grand Rapids, MI: Williams B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2000), 245.

them to be oppressed and bound by sin. Therefore, God sent God's son, Jesus, to pay the price for the penalty of sin by shedding His blood on the cross for sin. Due to Christ purchasing humankind, they belong in Christ. Humankind are now united in the family of God and can walk in the freedom of being in a relationship with God.

The second part of the chapter is the study of ecclesiology. Ecclesiology is the study of the church. God created humankind to have a desire to belong to a community and a family. To belong to God in Christ is to belong to others. The church includes the people of God because they have made the person of Jesus Christ the Lord of their lives and experienced a new birth. As a result of this new birth, the believer now becomes part of the Church universal. Known by many as the Body of Christ, the Church is mandated to be witnesses of the risen Lord. Church leaders must experience the sense of belonging not only to and in Christ but also to and in the local church to others. Church leaders should exercise caution when evaluating a church based only upon the size of the building and congregation. This is because the size of the hearts of the congregation will truly determine their dedication to the fulfillment of God's vision and creating a sense of belonging that extends beyond its walls.

Chapter five, the interdisciplinary chapter, continues the integration of the theme of belongingness by investigating The Need to Belong Theory. Psychologists Roy Baumeister and Mark Leary's The Need to Belong Theory suggested that the fulfillment of the need to belong is just as important as the physical needs of food and shelter. They state, "A minimum number of close ties are important for all human beings. The motivation to form and sustain at least a minimum amount of social connections is an influential human drive. It shapes emotion, cognition, and behavior. It explains self-

esteem as an internal measure of one's chances of having good relationships.”³ In their theory, two characteristics must be accomplished: “The first part is that people need to have positive and pleasant, not negative, interactions with others. The second part specifies that these interactions cannot be random but, should take place as part of stable, lasting relationships in which people care about each other’s long-term health and well-being.”⁴ Baumeister and Leary argue that both criteria are required to fulfill the need of belonging. When there is an absence of either one of the criteria, then this threatens the psychological and physical well-being of an individual.

Learning about The Need to Belong Theory helped in understanding what a person needs for developing a sense of authentic belongingness. Accomplishing this will help in addressing the problem with the ministers and help in improving personal relationships so that no barriers can get in the way of individuals being their best self and so that communal goal can be reached.

Chapter six discusses the implementation of the project. There were twenty-two ministers who participated in the six-session church leadership development model. During the six sessions, each participant completed a pre- and post-questionnaire at the beginning of week one and the end of week six, respectively. The post-questionnaires gauged the knowledge each participant gained during the process. Also, leaders participated and took a Personal Vocational Assessment called APEST, which is from Alan Hirsh’s program called activating 5Q. The acronym APEST stands for the five-fold

³ Psychology, “Need to Belong,” accessed January 2, 2020, <http://psychology.iresearchnet.com/social-psychology/interpersonal-relationships/need-to-belong/>.

⁴ Psychology, “Need to Belong,” accessed January 2, 2020, <http://psychology.iresearchnet.com/social-psychology/interpersonal-relationships/need-to-belong/>.

functions as outlined in Ephesians 4:1-16: apostle, prophetic, evangelist, shepherd and teacher. They also participated in Bible studies, group discussions, activities to improve self-esteem, an individual assessment, break-out sessions, homework and journaling.

This project, “A Sense Belonging: A Model for Church Leadership Development Utilizing Five-Fold Ministry Gifts,” is a tool for educating, developing and empowering church leadership to a new level of spiritual awareness and focus. The hypothesis is that if church leaders become aware of belonging in Christ, they will be unified, spiritually mature, and obtain necessary tools for their God-given purposes. As a result, members will discover their gifts and assist in building up the Kingdom of God. The hypothesis of this project was successfully fulfilled. It created an intense spiritual awareness that is beyond the ordinary. This new focus also led to an extraordinary unity of faith in Jesus Christ. The APEST test that the ministers took, brought much excitement and enthusiasm because it gave a detailed description of their calling and the different ways a person with that calling can function. There were also discussions on how and where each person's calling can fit in the New Beginnings Fellowship Church, as well as outside the four walls of the church. In addition, group discussion and strategies were made to help others in the congregation to discover their gifts. The teachings, Bible studies, and dialogue of this project enhanced opportunities for experiencing a true sense of belonging in Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER ONE

MINISTRY FOCUS

In the church community, members need a sense of belonging to be able to develop spiritually, emotionally and mentally. When a member finds their place in the church community, they feel secure, recognized and suitable to serve in ministry. In addition to serving a person who is connected can receive spiritual guidance, encouragement and brotherly love.

The objective of this chapter is to bring awareness that the church community must create an environment that people are able to feel the love and warmth of God. Also, the church community must help its member reach their full potential in Christ. Throughout my life people have told me what I could and could not do in ministry. In my contexts, it was a struggle to find my place because I did not have a sense of belonging. This is due to not having a sense of self-awareness and not being able to develop my spiritual gifts. This project is shaped through the intentional spiritual and practical development of ministers and ministry leaders.

Many church members struggle with belonging because they do not understand how their purposes fit within their context in ministry. As they struggle to find validation and affirmation from man, frustration in finding their place in ministry incurs. Many

people share the sentiments of the poem called, “Wallflower” by Lang Leav that is written in her book *Love and Misadventure*.

Shrinking in a corner, pressed into the wall; do they know I'm present,
am I here at all? Is there a written rule book, that tells you how to be—all the right
things to talk about—that everyone has but me? Slowly I am withering—a
flowered deprived of sun; longing to belong to—somewhere or someone.⁵

A sense of belonging is a human need just like food and shelter. God created man to live in a harmonious community with one another. In this journey called life, there is value in belonging. Belonging is an acceptance as a member or part. When a person has a sense of belonging in a community, they feel a sense of connection, they are content, motivated, and healthier. According to the Department of Human Resources and Skills Development of Canada, a sense of belonging with one's country and community can positively influence one's sense of identity and how much they participate in society. It can also improve physical and mental health.⁶

My context of ministry is the New Beginnings Fellowship Church (NBFC) to which I serve as the executive pastor. The church is located within the city of Indianapolis, in the state of Indiana. It is a thriving church with four services and two locations. New Beginnings Fellowship Church in Indianapolis, Indiana, which is affectionately known as the Circle City because Highway 465 goes around the entire city. Indianapolis is also known as “The Crossroads of America,” because it is in the central portion of the state. The people of Indiana are called “Hoosiers.” Indianapolis was founded in 1820. It was originally inhabited by the Lenape, which are also called the

⁵ Lang Leav, *Love and Misadventure* (Kansas City, MO: McMeel, Andrews, 2017), 31.

⁶ “Sense of Belonging,” Psychology Today, last modified March 14, 2014, accessed January 15, 2018, <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/pieces-mind/201403/create-sense-belonging>.

Delaware Indians. Indianapolis derived from the community name that combines Indiana with the Greek word for “city.” The city lies along the White River and it is the capital of the state of Indiana. It is also the largest city in Indiana and the fifteenth largest city in the United States with the population of 941,229.⁷

The New Beginnings Fellowship Church in Indianapolis, Indiana is a church plant of Eastern Star Church (ESC) where Jeffry Allen Johnson is the pastor. New Beginnings Fellowship Church opened its doors in March 2004. Pastor Johnson asked 500 members to commit to serve at the church for at least a year.

In 2007, NBFC marched through the doors to a 42,000 square foot edifice that cost \$5.6 million dollars. The ministry continued to experience phenomenal growth and by July 2012 the \$5.6 million building debt was paid off. By this time, the ministry started having three Sunday services, 8:00 a.m., 10:45 a.m. and 12:45 p.m. The Lord put it on Pastor Jackson’s heart to begin a service on the Westside of Indianapolis, so in 2013, New B West opened for worship at 9:30 a.m. at the Guion Creek Middle School. Now Pastor Jackson was preaching four sermons every Sunday. God continued to bless New Beginnings and the ministry continued to expand. On August 30, 2015, the ministry broke ground for a new parking lot that is located across the street from the church building. By 2016, the parking lot was complete and construction on New Beginnings Fellowship Church’s Kingdom Center for children began. Glory be to God, after a year, the state-of-the-art Kingdom Center opened in March 2017. The center is a \$4.6 million, two story building with a large indoor playground. On Sundays it is used for nursery, children’s church and the teen ministry. During the week, it serves as Kingdom Kids

⁷ “Indianapolis History Facts and Timeline,” World Guide, accessed November 15, 2017, http://www.world-guides.com/north-america/usa/indiana/indianapolis/indianapolis_history.html.

Childcare Center for infants to five-years old. In addition to the Kingdom Center being built in 2017, New Beginnings made a cash purchase of over twenty acres of land in November to begin building a place of worship for the New B West location.

Throughout the thirteen years that New Beginnings has been in existence, staff and ministries have grown to better serve the congregation. New Beginnings Fellowship Church is the place, “Where the Lord is Worshipped and His People are Changed!”

The church mainly consists of those fifty-five years and younger. Those members in the congregation that are fifty-five years and older, make up a small percentage of the church. It is a majority African American with a few Caucasian members. Over half of the congregation is single women, with a large portion of those women with children. The females make up 65% of the congregation’s singles.

The New B West Campus is a smaller congregation than the New B Main Campus. The 9:30 a.m. service average between 150 to 175 people a Sunday. The congregation is majority African American with the majority ranging between thirty and sixty years of age. In addition, the congregation consist of working middle class citizens which compares to the majority white collar workers that live in this area. There are more married couples in this congregations then singles. New B West is expected to really explode after their church building is built.

Context

New Beginning Fellowship Church is currently in its sixteenth year of ministry. The membership has grown to more than 5000 active members. NBFC has a children’s church ministry that averages over 300 children a Sunday, a teen ministry that average

seventy-five teens every Sunday and four services with an average attendance of 2000 – 2,200 on a Sunday.

The ministry is intentional about making sure the vision of the church is carried out. The vision statement is always taught and recited to all ministry leaders and members. It is as follows: The New Beginnings Fellowship Church is a ministry that has been built on principles driven by the Word of God. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come (2 Cor. 5:17). It is a place where those who are lost, troubled and broken can find strength and healing to their souls. Our environment is one where everyone can feel the love and warmth of God through the pastor, membership and the Holy Spirit. We are a people who honor God and meet the needs of God's children with the highest level of excellence, integrity and respect.

People are drawn to NBFC because of the anointed sound preaching and teaching of God's Word, the warm and friendly atmosphere, the dynamic praise and worship, Christian fellowship and numerous ministries to serve in, as well as to serve others. New Beginnings Fellowship Church is big on outreach. Each of the twenty-five ministries are asked to do at least one major outreach a year. The church assist others by providing numerous college scholarships, benevolence to those in need, a homeless outreach, street evangelism, gas giveaways, Christmas giveaways and so much more. The church is a very generous church. The majority of the people in the congregation understand what it means to serve.

In addition, NBFC's strengths include offering special classes every year, such as money management seminars, seminars for married couples, conferences for teens,

singles, men and women. Also, workshops such as “Before I Say I Do Pre-Marital Courses,” teacher training and Christian Living Courses are provided.

Lastly, it is my opinion that a great strength the church is the Assimilation Ministry. The Assimilation Ministry is hands on ministry to make sure that no new member falls through the cracks. They keep up with new members for a whole year to make sure that they assimilate into the life of the church. Their motto is, “No member left behind.”

The weakness of NBFC is that staff who are ministry leaders, do not take the time to get to know those they serve alongside. If relationships are not developed with people, then their gifts are not observed. Due to not taking the time to identify the gifts of those in ministry, there can be a tendency to stick people in places that are not a good fit for them. In addition, leadership can miss opportunities to fulfill needs within the Kingdom because members are not able to utilize their God given gifts. This is a concern of mine that members are not finding their place in the Body of Christ because there is no system or training format for leaders to assist them. In addition, many leaders at NBFC do not understand their own spiritual gifts; therefore, they cannot help those in their ministry identify their gifts. If everyone uses their spiritual gifts, then the body of Christ will be built up and every need will be met. When people utilize their spiritual gifts, it produces maturity and stability in the local church family.

This is an issue that is rooted in the history of NBFC and in my personal experience. As a result of this, many leaders and ministers have become frustrated in finding their place in the Kingdom because they are not being developed and or they feel overlooked. My hypothesis is that if church leaders become aware of their belonging in

Christ, they will be unified, spiritually mature, and obtain necessary tools for their God-given purposes. As a result, members will discover their gifts and assist in building up the Kingdom of God.

The biblical foundation for the six-session doctoral project, will be Ephesians 4:7-13. Data will be collected to measure understanding and behavioral changes through pre- and post-questionnaires, group discussion, homework assignments and individual interviews. The anticipated results are that the workshops will help ministers and ministry leaders increase their awareness of what it means to belong in the Body of Christ. More than this, it is hoped that the workshops aid in the spiritual formation of each leader and invoke in them a desire to intentionally mentor and train another as they have been trained.

Data will be collected to measure understanding and changes in feelings of belonging through pre- and post-questionnaires, group discussion, homework assignments, pre- and post-project testing and individual interviews. The anticipated result is that this training module will help pastors increase a sense of belonging, thus helping them assist others in understanding where they belong in the body of Christ.

Ministry Journey

In my youth, I benefited from organizations that empowered, trained and validated my worth such as Girls Scouts, Student Government and a group called Guild Girls, which was a training Christian Organization for girls that taught you how to live a life pleasing to God, mind, body and spirit. Additionally, I was involved in the church choir, junior nurse's guild, played softball, soccer, volleyball and basketball. All these

items helped developed my leadership and life skills. They also helped me feel accepted and gave me a sense of belonging because they showed me that a team or organization is successful if everyone does their part.

In my undergraduate college years, I studied education at Kentucky State University, a historically black college. There I was a part of student government and the Student Ambassador program. Since I was a young girl, I held leadership positions. It was always important to me to do my best when I was put in charge of training others or bringing structure and or order to something I was involved with.

During my senior year, I was voted by my classmates to represent them as Miss Kentucky State University. Being Miss Kentucky State University (KSU) came with a lot of pressure. It taught me that when in leadership you have a lot of highs and lows. My platform was to empower youth to understand that they had purpose. I also developed outreaches so that students could get involved. The year of my reign, I learned to hold tightly to God and speak God's word over my life. It also taught me to call on the Holy Spirit to help me do my Miss KSU assignments with grace and dignity. I developed tough skin, while maintaining a tender heart for those people who did not treat me well. The lessons learned back then, I still hold fast to today, that I must walk after the Spirit and not after flesh. In addition, I must not quit because times get difficult. It is imperative to keep going and finish strong. God also revealed to me during this time that when persons are faithful to God, God will elevate them.

Two years after receiving my Bachelor of Arts degree in Education, the Lord impressed upon my heart to get a Master of Arts degree in Education, specializing in Christian School Administration from Oral Roberts University (ORU). My mother was

already enrolled in the Master of Divinity program at ORU. My father wanted me to continue teaching, but I knew God told me to go so that I could be equipped to raise up urban Christian schools. I really did not know of many Christian Schools in the urban areas. However, I just trusted God and left for school. Oral Roberts University caused me to embrace a view that God should not be limited; and His power is incomprehensible. I observed models in ministry that involved large congregations, missions, outreaches throughout the world, and a ministry that has impacted millions over the last seventy years. A desire to travel the world was instilled in me as I met students from many countries who came to ORU to receive an education. I embraced Oral Robert's mission to educate the whole person: body, soul and spirit.

While attending ORU, I met a pastor from Indianapolis, Indiana. He was enrolled in two other summer classes. He shared during introductions that he had started an urban Christian School. I thought to myself, that I should meet him because that is the vision God shared with her. I introduced myself and had many conversations throughout the duration of their summer classes. At the completion of their classes, Pastor P said he would like to interview me for a position at his school. We kept in touch and during the next semester he sent me a plane ticket to come to Indianapolis for an interview with the board of the school. The interview went well; and the pastor took me on a tour of the school. As I was walking through the halls, I could hear the voice of the Lord saying, "You will be a mother to many children." I did not know what that meant at the time, but I held on to that word. I ended up taking the job as assistant principal. After I finished my semester at ORU, I moved to Indianapolis. Being a student at Oral Roberts University and living in Tulsa, Oklahoma for two years was a time of affirmation,

training and discipline. I discovered that obedience pays off. I did not know why I was picking the program at ORU, but it was all a part of God's plan for my life. This season proves that if God gives a dream or a vision, God will assist to bring it to fruition. I bring these beliefs to ministry.

I am an educator, principal, community organizer and mentor. The experience I gained by serving in these capacities helps me bring structure and organization to the places I serve. I developed curriculum, trained teachers, empowered students as well as parents. It is my belief that God has graced me spiritually and practically to address this leadership problem through developing a system and training for pastors in the church. I recognize that my education helped me obtain learning on how to draw out what is in a person. In addition, the secular degrees in education helped me learn about lesson preparation, address needs, develop mission, communicate that mission, create structure and systems so that the mission can be obtained and develop and evaluate leaders to ensure goals are accomplished. God allowed me to obtain the seminary education to give me a firm theological foundation and an opportunity to experience God in different ministry context. My multiple degrees coupled with my experiences gives me the tools to cultivate a strong project to meet the current needs of the church.

The Synergy

My call to ministry is to help bring structure to the church, to train leaders and be a coach to pastors. My purpose in ministry is to love God with all my heart, mind and strength according to Matthew 22:37; as well, as love my neighbor as myself according to Matthew 22:39. I believe that if I do these things, I will be obedient to what God told

the prophet Micah to tell the people of Israel, “He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God.” Again, I know that it is my calling to help others. In addition, I am confident that I am called to fight against systemic oppression. It is my belief that I cannot preach to others that God will make a way and not fight for that way to be open because the Bible says, “Faith without works is dead.” Therefore, my personal mission in life is to bring glory to God in whatever she does. I will be led by the Holy Spirit to equip His people for service by training them on how to live a Christian life and helping them reach their full potential spiritually, academically, professionally and personally.

The foundational scriptures that God has given me for my life and ministry is Luke 4:18-19 and Jeremiah 29:11. The work that God does through me as a servant, teacher, community leader, pastor, counselor, and caregiver will reflect the characteristics of Jesus’ ministry.

I declare that the Spirit of the Lord is upon me because He has anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free those who are downtrodden, to proclaim the favorable year of the Lord (Lk 4:18-19 NAS). “For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope,” (Jer. 29:11 NAS).

Professionally, my strength is that I strive for excellence. I enjoy serving people and I can work with others. Many people state that I am warm, generous and dependable. Ministry is my passion and I desire to fulfill my purpose in life. My spiritual gifts are helps, teaching, pastoring and administration.

Theologically, I bring the presence of Christ's holistic healing to members of the local church, their families and the community. My ministry is one of service to humanity that affirms each person's worth and dignity. It is a desire to remain ever learning, ever trusting, and ever faithful to God and in a state of continuous growth.

Understanding the frustration of people when they feel like they are not given the chance to fully be what God has called them to be; or that they are put in a box and not able to use the gift(s) God has given. I am prompted by God to teach and educate church leaders an awareness of self through the Bible and the Holy Spirit. The project, "A Sense of Belonging: A Model for Church Leadership Development Utilizing Five-Fold Ministry Gifts," will consist of the following pre- and post-questionnaire, spiritual gifts survey, group discussions, journaling and interviews. The behavioral objectives that will be targeted as benchmarks to measure the success of this project. Leaders will participate in a six-session study. Leaders will show their awareness of the Body of Christ by answering the post-questionnaire with accuracy.

Leaders will identify their APEST gift and articulate how it can be used within the vision of the church. Leaders will connect with a ministry that fits with their calling. If by chance New Beginnings Fellowship Church does not have an established ministry that a leader can connect to, the leader will be open to write a proposal for a future ministry or small group that they believe utilizes their APEST (apostolic, prophetic, evangelist, shepherd, teacher) gift and calling.

It is imperative that I teach leaders to activate their gifts as well as members, so that the body of Christ can be effective and powerful in these last days. In conclusion, the model that will challenge, train, activate and eventually hold accountable church

leaders to help shape others for the specific ministry that God has called them to, will be done by addressing a sense of belonging. My hypothesis is that if church leaders become aware of belonging in Christ, they will be unified, spiritually mature, and obtain necessary tools for their God-given purposes. As a result, members will discover their gifts and assist in building up the Kingdom of God.

CHAPTER TWO

BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS

The context is a thriving church, but some leaders struggle with a sense of belonging within the church. As a result of this, many leaders and ministers have become frustrated in finding their place in the Kingdom because they feel overlooked and alienated. Many times, the frustration results in disharmony, deceptive behavior and resentment among leaders. This frustration leads to a series of questions such as: What is the relationship between Christ and the body of Christ? What difference does being aware of the relationship between Christ and body of Christ make in the lives of Christians? How does one activate the body of Christ to accomplish its purpose?

Christian leaders must know who they are, whose they are and their responsibility in the Kingdom of God. The hypothesis for the research project is that if church leaders become aware of belonging in Christ, they will be unified, spiritually mature, and obtain necessary tools for their God-given purposes. As a result, members will discover their gifts and assist in building up the Kingdom of God.

This project is shaped through the intentional development of ministers and ministry leaders, to ultimately understand their awareness of their sense of belonging in Christ so that they are unified, mature and equipped to use their areas of giftedness to develop, create and empower others. In this biblical study, there will be scriptural

analysis coupled with the works and writings of biblical scholars and theologians that have studied this passage extensively.

Ephesians 4:7-13 has been chosen as the biblical foundation for focus of study for the project, “A Sense of Belonging: A Model for Church Leadership Development Utilizing Five-Fold Ministry Gifts.”

But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ’s gift. Therefore, it says, “WHEN HE ASCENDED ON HIGH, HE LED CAPTIVE A HOST OF CAPTIVES, AND HE GAVE GIFTS TO MEN.” (Now this expression, “He ascended,” what does it mean except that He also had descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is Himself also He who ascended far above all the heavens, so that He might fill all things.) The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ.¹

This text was considered for examination of helping to substantiate the argument for leadership development in awareness of belonging in Christ. In this passage, Paul shares the organization and the administration of the early Church. He also explains the purpose of leadership and lay members and how they are defined and carry out responsibilities as followers of Christ. Eugene H. Peterson notes on the book of Ephesians:

Ephesians is an inside look at what is beneath and behind and within the church that we do see whenever it becomes visible. It provides our best access to what is involved in the formation of the church, not so much the way the church appears in our towns and cities, but the essence that is behind the appearances: God’s will, Christ’s presence, the Holy Spirit’s work. This is what we simply must get through our heads if we are going to understand and participate rightly in any church that we are part of. This is the only writing in the New Testament that provides us with such a detailed and lively account of the inside and underground workings of the complex and various profusion of “churches” that we encounter and try to make sense of.²

¹ Biblical citations are from the New Revised Standard Version unless otherwise stated, Ephesians 4:7-13.

² Eugene H. Peterson, *Practice Resurrection: A Conversation on Growing Up in Christ* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2010), 14-15.

For church leaders to be fruitful, they must have strong spiritual roots. Christian leaders must live from the inside out. According to C. Mack Roark, “Relationship with God precedes and determines relationship with self and others.”³

Historical and Literary Contexts

To interpret the passage Ephesians 4:7-13, one needs to first look at the author, date, recipients and circumstances. Concerning authorship, Ephesians has distinctive qualities as another Pauline Epistle. Pauline Epistles are structured with a standard salutation, thanksgiving, they develop doctrine as duty, and has a closing greeting. The Epistle even list Paul as the author in Ephesians 1:1 and 3:1. In addition, it lists the author as a prisoner in Ephesians 3:1 and 4:1. Lastly, it claims the author as an ambassador in chains according to Ephesians 6:20. These qualities all describe Paul’s condition at the time.

However, there are critics who argue that Ephesians was written by one of his students, such as Timothy, Tychicus or Onesimus. These theologians such as Schleiermacher, Moffatt and Goodspeed make an argument that Paul was not the author due to some of the vocabulary, the differences in style and viewpoint between this Epistle and the seven other authentic Pauline Letters. However, despite the theories of a different author, there is overwhelming evidence that Paul wrote Ephesians; therefore, a Pauline authorship will be assumed throughout this chapter.

³ C. Mack Roark, “Interpreting Ephesians 4-6: God’s People in a Walk Worthy of His Calling,” *Southwestern Journal of Theology* 39, no. 1 (1996): 32-42.

The date for this letter is after Paul had become an Apostle (Eph 1:1), after followers of Christ had begun to exist in Ephesus (Eph 1:1), and after Gentiles in general were becoming Christians (Eph 2:13). Ephesians was written in Rome while Paul was in prison around A.D. 60-61.⁴ Ephesus was the third most important city in the Roman Empire and had a population of around 250,000 and was the capital of the Asia province.⁵ This city was the center for worship of Artemis and worship of the Emperor. The Artemis cult taught that Artemis was over everything, and all the cosmos was subject to her.⁶ Closely associated with her is Hecate who was the goddess of the “underworld.”⁷ Artemis was linked with fertility and the birth process.⁸ This city also had a large colony of Jews and was also influenced by the practice of magic.⁹

Many scholars believe that Ephesians was a circular letter sent to the churches of Asia. It is debated that due to this Epistle not addressing any specific problem in any church, it was written for general use. The reader sees the Epistle of Ephesians was written to Gentiles according to Ephesians 2:11 which says, “So then, remember that at one time you Gentiles by birth, called, “the uncircumcision” by those who are called “the

⁴ Kenneth Boa and Bruce Wilkerson, *Talk Thru the Bible* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2002), 401.

⁵ J. I. Packer, Merrill C. Tenney, William White Jr., *Illustrated Encyclopedia of Bible Facts* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1995), 509.

⁶ PHEME PERKINS, “The Letter to the Ephesians,” *The New Interpreter’s Bible*, vol. 11 (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2000), 351.

⁷ PERKINS, *The New Interpreter’s Bible*, 361.

⁸ E. K. SIMPSON, *Commentary on the Epistle to the Ephesians: The New International Commentary on the New Testament*, ed. F. F. BRUCE (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1979), 17.

⁹ MARGARET Y. MACDONALD, *Colossians and Ephesians*, Sacra Pagina Series, vol. 17, ed. DANIEL J. HARRINGTON (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 2000), 20.

circumcision” a physical circumcision made in the flesh by human hands.” Ephesians 4:17 which states, “Now this I affirm and insist on in the Lord: you must no longer live as the Gentiles live, in the futility of their minds.” The problem during this time was that Gentile Christians were not morally living up to Christ-like standards. They also were trying to separate themselves from Jewish fellow believers, by forgetting how God had saved and delivered the Jews. This Epistle addresses these issues by explaining that Christ is the head of the Church, which includes both Jews and Gentiles coming together united by Christ to be one body. By faith, Jews and Gentiles were bonded together and share in the Messianic promise according to Ephesians 1:13 and 4:30.

Love, service and obedience are vital in the life of the body of believers. Paul encourages fellow believers to live a life worthy of their high calling as disciples of Christ. Wilkerson and Boa wrote, “The theme and purpose of Ephesians is to make believers more aware of their position in Christ because this is the basis for their practice on every level of life.”¹⁰ Christians are called to live out their destiny which is connected to the body of Christ. The calling for the body of Christ is unity which gives a sense of belonging because Christians are unified with the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit and with other believers. It is important that all Christians understand that Christ is the center that unites all things. Without Christ there is disunity. God desires that the universe be a place of harmony and this can only be if all things, all people and powers in heaven and earth are united in Christ. E. F. Scott reveals, “The innumerable broken strands were to be brought together in Christ, knotted again into one, as they had been in the beginning. The central thought of Ephesians is the realization of disunity in nature, disunity in man,

¹⁰ Boa and Wilkerson, *Talk Thru the Bible*, 401.

disunity in time, disunity in eternity, disunity between God and man, and the conviction that all that disunity can only become unity when all men and all powers are united in Christ.”¹¹ I agree with this statement because it is supported by Ephesians 2:14-16, which reads:

He Himself is our peace, who made both *groups into* one and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall, by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, *which is* the Law of commandments *contained* in ordinances, so that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, *thus* establishing peace, and might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity.

This observation supports the text in Ephesians 4:13, without unity in the faith, the church is deviating from God’s divine plan and purpose. When there is a deviation in the plan of God it inevitably produces weakness, division, strife and fruitlessness. This is why it is important for church leaders to share with their members as Paul shared with the Gentiles in Ephesians 4: 4-6, “There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all.”

The Catholic priest, Max Josef Metzger, who was condemned to death by execution in April 1944 emphasized unity, not based on nationalism and racism, but a unity of participation in the Spirit of God. Dr. Isam E. Ballenger, a professor at Baptist Theological Seminary states, “Metzger believed in the peace of God and he participated in this peace, believing the peace of God is for the peace of the church and the peace of the church is for the peace of the world. And the unity of God is for the unity of the

¹¹ William Barclay, *The Letters to the Galatians and Ephesians* (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press, 1956), 77-78.

church and the unity of the church is for the unity of the whole creation. Unity of the church results in mission and the goal of the mission is unity of all things.”¹²

The Spirit of God brings about a oneness that transcends differences such as race, religion, cultures, ethnicity, gender, economic and educational status, while embracing diversity. An awareness of a sense of belonging in Christ helps Christians respond to their calling. In Christ, they receive the fullness of the Holy Spirit on their lives. The Holy Spirit in turn brings unity with each believer because of their connection to God to whom they have all access. Through this, the church can grow and make disciples. Christians must be aware of their sense of belonging. Christians are a part of the body of Christ and Jesus Christ is the head of the body. He is in charge and Christ is both the goal and the source for Christian growth. Apart from Christ a Christian is unable to accomplish anything.

1 Corinthians 12:12-20 reveals:

Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ. For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. Even so the body is not made up of one part but of many. Now if the foot should say, “Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,” it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. And if the ear should say, “Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,” it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? But in fact God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. If they were all one part, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, but one body. The eye cannot say to the hand, “I don’t need you!” And the head cannot say to the feet, “I don’t need you!” On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and the parts that we think are less honorable we treat with special honor. And the parts that are unpresentable are treated with special modesty, while our presentable parts need no special treatment. But God has put the body

¹² Isam E. Ballenger, “Ephesians 4:1-16,” *Interpretation* 51, no. 3 (1997): 292–95, accessed April 15, 2019, <https://search-ebscohostcom.utsdayton.idm.oclc.org/login.aspx?direct=true&db=rfh&AN=ATLA0000908091&site=ehost-live>.

together, giving greater honor to the parts that lacked it, so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it. Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.

This passage of scripture depicts that every member of the body of Christ has an important part to play. Even though God allows each member to be an individual, God's desire is for them to not have an individualistic mindset. Satan uses those with an individualistic mindset and corrupted flesh to carry out his work of destruction. If Christians do not acknowledge their personal proclivities for individualism, it can cause division, misunderstandings, cause creations of suspicions against brothers and sisters that are unfounded; also, mummering against each other and disharmony. Christ came to save us from ourselves and individualism. Since the body is one, everything is done to bring God glory. In 2 Corinthians 5:14-15 it states, "For the love of Christ controls us, because we have concluded this: that one has died for all, therefore all have died; and he died for all, that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised." The body is one which means the work is one. Therefore, Christians should be aware of their sense of belonging in Christ because this is the hope to which Christians are called.

Text and Exegesis

Ephesians is divided into two main parts. The first half focuses on the purpose of Christian faith and the function of the church. The second half focuses on how each member of the body of Christ should conduct themselves so that unity can be achieved. Within these two larger divisions, nine smaller divisions exist. The first section is a

greeting (1:1-2). The second section is God adopting humankind into God's family, resulting in bringing unity (1:3-2:10). The third section illustrates that the Gentiles are included into this unity (2:11-3:13). The fourth section includes a prayer and a thanksgiving (3:14-21). The fifth section is a Pauline exhortation to the Ephesians to be Christ's instrument in bringing unity into the world (4:1-16). For the church to accomplish the goal of coming into "the maturity of the fullness of Christ" (Eph.4:13), where there is reconciliation in the world between man and man, and man and God, Christians must have a certain character. The qualities of a Christian are discussed by Paul in verses one through six and in verses seven through sixteen the functions of the members of Christ's church are laid out. In this chapter Ephesians, 4:7-13 will be discussed. Ephesians 4:7-10 states:

But to each one of us grace has been given according to the measure of Christ's gift. Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.

Every gift that humanity possesses is given through the grace of Jesus Christ. The Greek word for grace is "*charis*."¹³ Charis means unmerited favor. King Jesus, who conquered death on the cross by raising from the dead and ascending on high, gave to all the community gifts to the church that they did not earn or deserve. Gifts are not just for the leaders but are for everyone; and Jesus distributes the gifts as He chooses. The Greek word "*didomi*" found in verse seven and eleven.¹⁴ It literally means that Christ gave

¹³ "Ephesians 4," Blue Letter Bible, accessed June 14, 2019, https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/eph/4/7/t_conc_1101007.

¹⁴ "Ephesians 4:7," Blue Letter Bible, accessed June 14, 2019, https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/eph/4/7/t_conc_1101007.

gifts that cannot and will not be taken away or cancelled. Jesus' followers, those who experienced a new birth through confessing their faith in Jesus Christ, must be aware that the gifts are bestowed to the church, which is the body of Christ, to help further the teachings and impact of Christ in the world.¹⁵ They are not for self-glory, but for God's glory. Due to Christ's ascension, Jesus is not limited to an earthly body. In Jesus' glorified body He can be everywhere empowering his followers to fulfill their God given calling and purpose. William Barclay says, and I agree, "To Paul the ascension of Jesus meant not a Christ-deserted, but a Christ-filled world."¹⁶ When Jesus ascended on high, He commissioned the Church through Jesus. Christians are empowered because of the presence of Christ and the ministry of Christ can express itself through the Body of Christ.

Ephesians 4:11 states, "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers." In this verse of scripture, Paul describes how God would like the church to be organized. This verse also provides a unit of officers of the church for presentation. Ephesians 4:11 also identified those whose assignments were to oversee the whole Church, some were assigned to stay at one place in a local congregation, while others were sent out to do the will of God. The unit was described by Paul as having received gifts given by Jesus Christ. The gifts are presented together and are all needed to further the mission of Christ. Paul is making it clear that the functions of the office of the apostle, prophet, evangelist, shepherd, pastor and teacher are essential to the body of Christ. The five offices are needed to be active and present in

¹⁵ Alan Hirsh, *5Q Reactivating the Original Intelligence and Capacity of the Body of Christ* (Atlanta, GA: 100 Movements, 2017), 7.

¹⁶ Barclay, *The Letters to the Galatians and Ephesians*, 171.

a community of believers if the body of Christ is going to be able to minister as Jesus intended.

The offices of the apostle, prophet, evangelist, shepherd and teacher are what some call the fivefold ministry. Alan Hirsh, an author and leader in the missional church movement, has pinned the word “APEST” to identify the five offices. APEST will be used in this chapter when speaking collectively about the apostle, prophet, evangelist, shepherd and teacher. Mr. Hirsh argues that, “APEST” is an operating system that helps the church become aware of its faith and purpose. According to *Merriam Webster’s Dictionary*, a system is, “A regularly interacting or interdependent group of items forming a unified whole.”¹⁷ Each calling has its own set of responsibilities. When each operates according to the plan of God then the church will be mature and what Jesus intended it to be.

As executive pastor of New Beginnings Fellowship Church, one of my primary responsibilities is maintaining unity and effectiveness for creating and overseeing the operational systems of the church. I constantly share with the staff all the time, that when you stay within the system, everything runs smoothly. When you go outside of the systems that are in place, the results cause problems for everyone else because every person and ministry are interconnected. I often use the quote, “If you work the system, then it will work.” The living body has systems, cardiovascular, nervous, digestive, endocrine, muscular-skeletal, and immune systems, just to name a few. Each system is interdependent, but they form an intricate whole. It is so intricate that if a system is not present or is not functioning to its fullest capacity, then the whole body is ill. In addition,

¹⁷ “System,” Merriam Webster, accessed January 15, 2019, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/system>.

if a large percentage of a person's vital organs no longer worked properly, the possibility of death is inevitable. Knowing that each part affects the whole, creates a realization that each part needs the others to function. The five APEST systems is no different. When each system exists and is functioning at its highest level, then the whole system fulfills the purpose for what it was created. APEST system enables the body of Christ to grow, mature and to be built up so that the members can attain the fullness of Christ. However, when the APEST system is missing one of its important elements, the body of Christ is not fully functional. This can result in members operating in a spirit of dysfunction, which leads to people becoming frustrated, broken and divided amongst each other.

In Ephesians 4:11, Paul identifies the five offices and the explanation of each function and their contributions to the body of Christ as they are empowered by the Holy Spirit. The offices are apostle, prophet, evangelist and teacher and will be discussed in detail below.

Apostle

To qualify to be an apostle in the early Church there were two expected criteria to meet. First, an apostle had to have seen Jesus. Secondly, an apostle had to be a witness of the resurrection and of the Jesus Christ. When the eleven disciples of Jesus met to elect a replacement for Judas, the requirement was that he must have witnessed the resurrection according to Acts 1:21-22 which says, "Therefore, of these men who have accompanied us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John to that day when He was taken up from us, one of these must become a witness with us of His resurrection." Apostles walked with Jesus and

shared His ways and His teachings with others. It was a matter of time before all the apostles passed away. However, the divine apostolic calling is still alive. The qualification remains in a sense. To teach about Christ, it is important to know Him and have a relationship with Him; and those who bring the message of Christ to others must have experienced the power of Christ's resurrection. The Greek word for apostle is "Apostolos" which means, "One commissioned and sent forth by another to represent him in some way-an envoy, a delegate, messenger, missionary."¹⁸

The Holy Spirit empowers the person who has the apostolic gift to understand the purpose of the church in the world and to make sure that the body of Christ stays focused on God's mission. They help to oversee the health and organization of the church, theologian Darrell Guder states, "It is this ministry that ensures that the church is always centered on its calling to be the agent and instrument of God's mission and that everything it is and does relates to and demonstrates that calling."¹⁹ Those who have the apostolic gift have an intrinsic desire to make sure that the church remains true to her calling. The church is an apostolic body that sends ambassadors in the world to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Prophet

The prophet is a forth-teller. Prophets forth-tell the will or heart of God, whether it is in the present or in the future. In the early Church, prophets moved from place to place speaking a direct message from God. They also announced the consequences if

¹⁸ R. Paul Caudill, *Ephesians: A Translation with Notes* (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1979), 21.

¹⁹ Hirsh, *5Q Reactivating the Original Intelligence and Capacity*, 99.

people disobeyed God. Prophets had a dangerous vocation; for they were usually the first to be persecuted for their faith.

Today as well as in the early Church, those who have the gift of prophecy are often rejected and feel lonely because people would rather walk after their flesh instead of being obedient to the Spirit of God. True prophets listen to the voice of God and speak and act on God's behalf no matter what. They hold themselves to a high moral standard and admonish people to walk in righteousness, holiness, faithfulness and obedience. They guard the hearts of God's people.

Alan Hirsh shares, "The church is a prophetic community by its life and witness."²⁰ I believe that the Body of Christ should display the heart of God to the world. The world should see how the people of God reverence, love and obey Him and His word. There cannot be discrepancies between the declarations of the church and its demonstration of being an effective body of Christ.

Evangelist

An evangelist was one in the early church who wandered from place to place like the prophets. They were like missionaries spreading the Good News of Jesus Christ to a world that had never heard it. They were not esteemed highly as the apostles who walked with Jesus. Nor were they deemed to have direct messages from God for the people like the prophets. Evangelists were servants who enlisted soldiers for the Army of the Lord. As in the days of Apostle Paul, the evangelist still has a special ability to communicate the Gospel to unbelievers. They proclaimed the Gospel in such a way that it inspired

²⁰ Hirsh, *5Q Reactivating the Original Intelligence and Capacity*, 102.

people to accept Christ. All Christians are commissioned to share the message of Christ as it states in Matthew 28:19-20, “Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

Even though all true Christians need to be prepared to share their faith with unbelievers and lead them to Christ, there are those with a special gift of connecting unbelievers to God, as well as to the Body of Christ. These connectors have a gift of evangelism. Evangelists are not limited in ways they can minister. They have a passion for getting the Gospel out by any means necessary. The evangelists help bring converts to the church, which helps the church grow. Evangelists are an important part of the body of Christ because they bear the good news in every man’s world.

Shepherd/Pastor

In the text the word “pastor” is used. In some translations the word “shepherd” is used. The word comes from the Latin translation “*pastores*,” which means a herdsman, shepherd; root meaning is “to protect,” one who tends, feeds, protects the flock.²¹ In the Bible, in Psalm the twenty-third chapter, the reader sees the image of the good shepherd who takes care of his sheep. Unlike prophets and evangelists, a shepherd/pastor did not wander in the early church. They were settled and served a body of believers. They were men responsible for teaching, feeding, developing, protecting and helping people find their gifts. Those entrusted to them were valuable along with their growth in faith,

²¹ Caudill, *Ephesians*, 41.

development of gifts and fulfillment of their purpose to the body of Christ were of supreme importance. A formal definition of a pastor as given by C. Peter Wagner states, “The gift of a pastor is the special ability that God gives to certain members of the Body of Christ to assume a long- term personal responsibility for the spiritual welfare of a group of believers.”²²

A good shepherd/pastor knows their sheep and cares for the well-being of all their sheep. When one in the body of Christ goes astray, the shepherd/pastor goes after that member to bring him or her back into the body. The shepherd/pastor is called to maintain a loving and healthy community. This is how the body of Christ stays united and focused up its mission.

Teacher

In Paul’s identification of the offices of the church, he shared that the teacher had one of the most important tasks in the church. The gift of teaching is not only listed in Ephesians, but it is also listed in 1 Corinthians twelfth chapter and Romans the twelfth chapter. Teachers usually served one congregation. During the times of the early church, there were very few books because every book was written by hand. Therefore, the story of Jesus was shared orally a long time before the story was ever written. A teacher had a great responsibility to accurately spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ to those who did not know anything about Christianity. It was their job to teach the precepts of the Christian faith. C. Peter Wagner says, “The gift of teaching is the special ability that God gives to certain members of the Body of Christ to communicate information relevant to the health

²² C. Peter Wagner, *Your Spiritual Gifts* (Raleigh, NC: Regal Books, 1979), 134.

and ministry of the Body and its members in such a way that others will learn.”²³ Those with the gift of teaching are concerned with discipleship and cultivating a biblical worldview. Ministry teachers are needed to share the wisdom and knowledge of God. They help the body of Christ understand the truth about God, themselves and their purpose. Therefore, it is important that teachers study the word of God and stay in tune to the voice of God because they cannot teach what they do not know. They also must practice what they teach, because they cannot lead where they are not willing to go.

The fivefold ministry gifts of apostle, prophet, evangelist, shepherd, teacher (APEST), helps church leaders understand the callings and functions of the offices of the church. Jesus modeled all five areas flawlessly during His earthly ministry. In Ephesians 4:11, Apostle Paul shares how working as one body, empowered by the Holy Spirit, can continue Jesus’ mission to accomplish the goals that are listed in verses twelve and thirteen.

Verse twelve states, “For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.” Here Paul shares with the early church about the aim and mission of APEST. The Greek word that is used for perfecting is the word “*kataritsmon*.”²⁴ This word is used in surgery when a limb or a joint needed to be set back in place or mend what has been broken. In Mark 1:19, the word is defined as mending nets. The basic understanding of the word is to put a person or a thing in the condition that it ought to be. “Jesus gave the gifts of Apostle, Prophets, Evangelist, Shepherds and Teachers to the Body of Christ is so equipped, so educated, so helped, so

²³ Wagner, *Your Spiritual Gifts*, 120.

²⁴ Barclay, *The Letters to the Galatians and Ephesians*, 176.

cared for, so perfectly joined together, so sought out when they go astray, that they become what they ought to be.”²⁵ Their aim is to make sure the body of Christ is built up and strong. They must be about the business of construction and not destruction in order to create wholeness and unity. Spiritual wholeness comes when the church, both collectively and individually, is in complete conformity to God’s word to equip the saints for service. These are the responsibilities of the apostles, prophets, evangelist, shepherds and teachers.

Verse thirteen states, “Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.” The aim continues to be shared by Paul. He states the body of Christ needs to be built up in order to achieve oneness of the faith and knowledge of Jesus. It is not just enough to hear of Jesus, but it is important that the church is aware of Jesus’ attributes, grace, love, salvation, forgiveness, power and truth in order to lead each member to a place of maturity in Christ so they can act like and reflect Jesus Christ. William Barclay says, “Christ is the head; the Church is the body. The head must have a body that it can direct; the brain, the mind must have a body through which it can work. The Church is quite literally hands to do Christ’s work, feet to run upon His errands, a voice to speak His words.”²⁶ Barclay makes a good point and I believe God wants to move one rhythmically as if they are to accomplish the great work of redemption.

The Apostle Paul in the text, Ephesian 4:7-13, shared with new converts a guide for teaching the purpose of Christ in the church by making them aware of their identity as

²⁵ Barclay, *The Letters to the Galatians and Ephesians*, 76.

²⁶ Barclay, *The Letters to the Galatians and Ephesians*, 77.

followers of Christ. Paul also illustrated how believers are to understand their God-given purpose, individually and corporately. Paul furthered explained the roles of church leaders are used for equipping the church in accomplishing the ultimate mission of oneness in Christ. Paul makes it clear to the church in Ephesus that for restoration, perfection and healing to truly take place, the whole body of Christ is needed. It is the birthright of the entire body of Christ to do ministry. Everything that Paul addressed represents essential factors in achieving the end goal of the project. The systemic process of this project involves the development of ministers and ministry leaders, to ultimately understand their awareness of their sense of belonging in Christ for the purpose of being unified, mature and to use areas of giftedness to develop, create and empower others.

When a person confesses Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Savior, there is a transformation that takes place. The Bible says in 2 Corinthians 5:17, “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things are passed away; behold, all things have become new.” They organically belong in Christ which makes them a follower of Christ and part of the organism which is called the body of Christ or the church. Belonging in Christ brings about a unity because in this Messianic community there are no barriers of race, class, nationality or denominations to divide or alienate. There is one God, one faith and one baptism. In addition, belonging in Christ brings about personal fulfillment because believers are aware of their identity in Christ. It also leads to a person understanding their purpose within the body of Christ.

This project will help church leaders develop an awareness that they belong to a powerful family of God that has been empowered to achieve a powerful, world changing

assignment. Using Paul's guide in developing the church in Ephesus provides a leadership development process for ministers and ministry leaders.

Upon critical analysis and synthesis of the selected scriptures, it can be concluded that there is a solid biblical foundation laid to support this project. Paul helps the reader to understand that the foundation of the church is Jesus Christ. Jesus gave spiritual gifts of apostle, prophets, evangelist, shepherds and teachers to continue His mission. It is up to each office to do their part while working together as a whole for accomplishing the aim of equipping others to serve in ministry, for church growth, maturity for the purpose of becoming the fullness of God. These scriptures help to alleviate the frustration of church leaders not knowing where they belong in the Kingdom. It also brings clarity regarding how to bring unity of faith in Jesus Christ, spiritual maturity, and it helps develop techniques designed to help church leaders fulfill their God-given purpose. The fruit of this process helps members to develop their gifts for building up the body of Christ. Consequently, the project, "A Sense of Belonging: A Model for Church Leadership Development Utilizing Five-Fold Ministry Gifts," is intended to continue the mission of Jesus Christ. The body of Christ is a spiritual system designed to save the lost through salvation, inspire sanctification and grow members to a level of maturity that edifies God in thoughts, words, actions and deeds. This biblical foundation exercise is a valuable resource for project implementation.

CHAPTER THREE

HISTORICAL FOUNDATIONS

Understanding the historical development of one's awareness of belonging in Christ is essential for constructing the project, "A Sense of Belonging: A Model for Church Leadership Development Utilizing Five-Fold Ministry Gifts." The need to belong is a basic need of human existence according to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs; and achieving a sense of belonging is essential for spiritual and psychological development. At some level, people desire to feel a sense of belonging that stems from the connections made with others. Belonging is achieved when a person has an understanding of who they are, whose they are, and what they have been put on earth to do. This structural approach undergirds the project's goal of helping ministers and church leaders experience an increased level of awareness of their belonging in Christ. A higher level of awareness and understanding regarding the power of belonging in Christ will assist church leaders by bringing unity of faith in Jesus Christ, building spiritual maturity, and incorporating teachings that will help them fulfill their God-given purpose. In addition, ministers and church leaders will gain tools for helping to discover their gifts in building up of the body of Christ.

The purpose of this chapter is to examine the lives of three early pioneers of the faith who wrestled with belonging in Christ. The first is St. Augustine of Hippo whose autobiography *Confessions* serves as the backdrop for critical engagement with his

spiritual maturation process. The next two individuals, Sarah Grimke and Angelina Grimke, are women who were early pioneers of the faith, having received God's revelation for their divine destiny. Through their autobiographies, it becomes apparent that they learned how their search for wisdom and purpose in life brought them to an awareness of who they were in Christ. Their newly found self-awareness created a desire for a deeper relationship with God, revealing their spiritual gifts that were designed to serve others. This newly discovered, God-given calling ignited a high level of spiritual passion for discovering God's will and purpose for each of their lives. Before their revelation of their respective purposes, their lives were full of frustration and dissatisfaction. Walking in their calling brought them fulfillment, self-gratification, a connection to the community of God, and glory to God.

The Pastor and Teacher: St. Augustine of Hippo

Great art Thou, O Lord, and greatly to be praised; great is Thy power, and Thy wisdom infinite. And Thee would man praise; man, but a particle of Thy creation; man, that bears about him his mortality, the witness of his sin, the witness that Thou resistest the proud: yet would man praise; for Thou madest us for Thyself, and our heart is restless, until it repose in Thee.¹

These initial lines, *Confessions of Saint Augustine* reveals that St. Augustine was aware of his belonging in Christ. The *Confessions* is an autobiography of Augustine's early life, written when he was in his forties, regarded as one of the first written manuscripts chronicling an individual's life during the fourth or fifth century. In this document, Augustine shares his journey and how he ultimately committed his life to Christ. The

¹ Augustine of Hippo, *The Confessions of St. Augustine* (Hyde Park, NY: New City Press, 2002), 1.

autobiography also discloses what it means to be a Christian and the struggles that one must overcome to live a devout Christian life.

St. Augustine of Hippo was an African who has come to be highly revered in Western Culture. Since his conversion to Christ in 386 A.D., he has been very influential in Christianity. His books are read and studied by young and old because of his works' relevance to daily life. People can relate to him because of his transparency and honesty exposed through the written prose regarding the personal struggles experienced in his quest for acquiring understanding and purpose. As a young man, St. Augustine was full of uncertainty and, was a seeker of truth, hoping to find meaning to his existence. Like many individuals, Augustine yearned to know the meaning of life. Through Augustine's writings, others can be enlightened by the answers he discovered in God:

The measure of Augustine's importance goes beyond the rare title, "Doctor of the Church," given to him in the Middle Ages. He was the first to give a self-examination before God in the form of His *Confessions* and thus give the church a biblical understanding of a man's life under the grace of God. He was the first to give a biblical view of history, time and the state in the City of God. He established the doctrine of the church in his anti-Donatist writings, a view that prevailed in the church for centuries. He gave the Western church a clear statement concerning the person of Christ, which was later established as doctrine by Leo. He made the grace of God in the gospel the theme of theology in the West.²

Saint Augustine of Hippo was born on November 13, 354 A.D. in the city of Tagaste, in the Roman North African province of Numidia, which is now called Souk Ahras, Algeria.³ As part of the Roman Empire, Latin was the dominant language and culture of his home country. In addition, Christianity was the dominant religion, which conflicted

² J. Newton, "Augustine of Hippo," *Who's Who in Christian History*, ed. J. Douglas and P. W. Comfort (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale Publishers, 1992), 52.

³ James J. O'Donnell, "Augustine the African," Georgetown University, accessed May 15, 2019, Faculty.georgetown.edu/jod/twaye/aug.1.html.

with Old Rome's traditions; however, there were still non-Latin speaking natives who worshipped pagan gods in certain areas of St. Augustine's homeland.

St. Augustine's father, Patricius, was a pagan who still worshipped the old gods of Rome, and his mother, Monica, was said to be a devout Christian. His mother trained her children in the ways of the Lord, and she prayed that Augustine would dedicate himself to God. Despite his mother's strong influence, Augustine was not baptized as a Christian until he was in his early thirties.

At the age of twelve, Augustine's parents and an affluent family friend managed enough money to send him to the town of Madaurus, which was about nineteen miles outside of Tagaste, to attend school. During this time, Augustine fell in love with learning, yet after four years of studying in Madaurus, he had to return home because money for his education had been depleted. Shortly after this, St. Augustine's father, Patricius, passed away. Ironically, before he passed away, he accepted Christ as his Savior. After Patricius' death, Monica, was left with limited resources, but she acquired enough finances to send Augustine to Carthage to study. His mother warned him of the temptations in the world, but, being away from home, he quickly fell into mischief and discovered the joys of sex. He ended up meeting a woman and fell deeply in love with her, but he was forbidden to marry her because they were of different social classes. They never married; however, she was his mistress for many years. Augustine and his mistress had a son named Adeodatus.⁴

Augustine's mother, Monica, was extremely disappointed that her son chose this lifestyle. In addition, she did not approve of Augustine being a seeker of knowledge

⁴ O'Donnell, "Augustine the African," 2, accessed May 15, 2019, Faculty.georgetown.edu/jod/twaye/aug.1.html.

through schools of thought such as Manichaeism and astrology. Manicheism was a religious cult from Persia that diametrically opposed the teachings of Christianity.

Monica knew that her son had a great education, and she wanted him to move to Italy and use his education. She also wanted him to do away with his mistress. Augustine partially listened to his mother and moved to Italy with his mistress and his son. The three of them settled in Milan, the administrative capital of the Roman Empire at that time, and Augustine began teaching. His mother soon had him engaged to a girl half his age who came from a privileged family. Though Augustine loved his mistress, he knew it was time to marry. He had his mistress sent back to Africa, where she lived a life of celibacy, devoted to God and prayer.⁵

In Milan, Augustine obtained a great education, a teaching position, a wife, and a home; however, he was not happy. He describes his unhappiness as his soul being sick because of desiring to know the truth. He looked for wisdom in the Holy Bible, and he began listening to the teachings of Bishop Ambrose who would become one of the most influential ecclesiastical figures of the fourth century.

In 386 A.D., a spiritual encounter occurred in Augustine's life when he heard a voice that told him to read the Bible. As he held the Bible, it fell open to Romans 13:11-14, a passage in the New Testament that declared drunkenness and sexual indulgence should be abandoned. This passage spoke to him and caused a desire for change, resulting in his conversion to Christianity. Bishop Ambrose took Augustine and his son through the conversion period and baptized them. Not long afterward, Augustine's mother died suddenly, which compelled him to teach God's truth. The manifestation of

⁵ O'Donnell, "Augustine the African," 2, accessed May 15, 2019, Faculty.georgetown.edu/jod/twaye/aug.1.html.

his mother's prayers had come into fruition. He decided to journey back to North Africa with his son, where he would concentrate on being spiritual and contemplative.⁶

St. Augustine, ministered to his flock with great dedication, especially in the ensuing years of troubling uncertainty, when the Roman Empire crumbled away, one province after another. In 410 A.D., the Vandals, a relatively obscure Germanic tribe, conquered Rome, looting and destroying much of the city and killing many of its residents. This horrific event shook the entire Roman Empire to its core. The book, *The City of God* was written in response to accusations that the ruin of Rome by barbarians in 410 was one of the consequences of the elimination of pagan worship by Christian emperors. St. Augustine refuted these claims and said that immorality was the results of Rome's destruction and it was indeed Christianity that saved the city from complete destruction. He further outlined his vision of two societies, ("The City of God") which are the followers of God and ("The City of Man") those who are not. These "cities" are symbolic embodiments of the two spiritual powers—faith and unbelief—that have opposed each other since the fall of the angels. *The City of God* became his most influential and widely read work.⁷

After Augustine's conversion, he used his academic background to write about theological doctrines such as grace, redemption, sin, and predestination. His thoughts on these doctrines shaped how members of the church viewed themselves and God. He wrote *Against the Academics*, in which he critiqued skepticism through writing *On Free*

⁶ O'Donnell, "Augustine the African," accessed May 15, 2019, Faculty.georgetown.edu/jod/twaye/aug.1.html.

⁷ Britannica Encyclopedia, "The City of God Work by St. Augustine," accessed May 17, 2019, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/The-City-of-God>.

Choice of the Will, in which he dealt with the existence and problem of evil. Another one of his writings, *The Catholic and Manichean Ways of Life*, explored the subject of ethics; and the writings of *On the Teacher*, he examined concepts of knowledge and language. These works formed the basis of his philosophy.⁸ It is believed that Augustine died in the year of 430 A.D. in his bed, while reading the book of Psalms as the Vandals attacked Hippo.

Augustine's spiritual gift of teaching and shepherding aided the body of believers to grow in their faith as well as helped them keep their biblical foundation pure amongst all the sects and false teachings. When he became aware of Christ, he found out that his life was bigger than just him. His relationship with God was more than rules to observed, but it was a connection with Christ to fulfill God's ultimate plan. Augustine is ascribed as saying, "A Christian is a mind through which Christ thinks, a heart through which Christ loves, a voice through which Christ speaks and a hand through which Christ helps."⁹

St. Augustine also taught that the community of believers should live a life reflecting harmony, wholeness, and in the image of heaven through understanding God's plan of the body of Christ working in love and unity. The study of Augustine's life can show others that he just did not allow his identity in Christ to translate to his head like other philosophies he studied, but ultimately to his heart. His journey is a testament of

⁸ Augustine of Hippo, *The Confessions of St. Augustin in A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, First Series*, vol. 1, *The Confessions and Letters of St. Augustine with a Sketch of His Life and Work*, ed. Phillip Schaff, trans. J. G. Pilkington (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Company, 1886), 62-63.

⁹ Watchman Nee, *The Body of Christ: A Reality* (New York, NY: Christian Fellowship Publishers, Inc., 1978), 81.

God's grace that as one seeks Him daily, they become more in tune with their awareness of what it truly means to belong in Christ.

Sarah and Angelina Grimke

“To remain silent in the face of evil is itself a form of evil.”¹⁰ Sarah and Angelina Grimke were pioneering figures in both the abolitionist and the women's rights movements in the 1800s. The Grimke sisters were born during a time when women were considered second class citizens. The sisters took a passionate stand against the racist and the sexist culture of their time. During the early 1800s, women were less superior and weaker than white males and were looked down upon and disregarded socially, economically, and politically. Economically, women had very few options for jobs and, those who did have a job, were discriminated against by receiving lower wages than men. “After a woman married, women did not have the right to own their own property, keep their own wages or sign a contract.”¹¹ As a whole, society expected that women serve as housewives and have no aspirations outside of the home. Women were discouraged from pursuing an education or a professional career and were taught that their job was to cook, clean, and take care of the family. Politically, women did not have the right to vote nor were they given any say regarding how to live their lives.

Sarah and Angelina Grimke grew up in a wealthy slave-owning family in Charleston, South Carolina where the values of slavery, whiteness and male dominance

¹⁰ Angelina Grimke and Sarah Grinke, “Freedom to be Outspoken,” LeeGold, accessed August 16, 2019, <https://www.tleegold.com/the-grimke-sisters>.

¹¹ “Rights for Women: The Suffrage Movement and its Leaders,” National Women's History Museum, accessed August 16, 2019, [www.nwhm.org/Rightsfor Women/tableofcontents.html](http://www.nwhm.org/RightsforWomen/tableofcontents.html).

were taught. Their father, Judge John Faucheraud Grimke and his wife Mary had fourteen children and were devout Episcopalians who owned hundreds of slaves. In the 1800s, slavery was the center of the economic system. Therefore, the sisters were raised to be numb as well as overlook the horrible conditions of slavery. They grew up, ignoring the inhumane treatment of slaves.

Eventually, they became aware that slavery was unjust, unbiblical and unfair to everyone except for powerful white males. Sarah Grimke's turning point on the ideology of slavery came when her eleven-year-old slave playmate, Hetty, was punished and separated from Sarah when Sarah's father found out that she was teaching her to read. Teaching a slave to read was in violation of South Carolina's strict slave codes, which Judge Grimke had helped write. After this incident, Sarah vowed to continue to teach the slaves to read in secret. In later years, she identified this incident as the event that planted the seed of her antislavery activism.¹²

The sisters became Quakers, studying the scriptures for themselves. It was their desire to be true followers of Jesus Christ and not someone who merely pays lip service to a socially respectable religion. They often used scripture as the basis of their arguments against slavery. One of the scriptures that Angelina often used was Psalm 8:4-5 which reads: "What is man that you are mindful of him, and the son of man that you care for him? Yet you have made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crown him with glory and honor" (Ps 8:4-5). She proclaimed that it was the role of the church to help end the sin of slavery. Her argument was that the slavery described in the Old Testament was not the same as the slavery of the West Indies or United States. Slaves in

¹² Mark Perry, Sarah Grimke, and Angelina Grimke, "On Slavery and Abolitionism Essays and Letters" (New York, NY: Penguin Books, 2014), x.

the Old Testament were indentured servants. In certain situations, slavery was permitted. These servants were part considered as part of the family (Gen. 17:12), they celebrated the same holidays as a non-slaves (Ex. 23:12; Deut. 5:14-15, 12:12), and were treated kindly (Ex. 21:7, 26-27). An indentured servant/slavery in the Old Testament were those in poverty or owed a debt. They were able to work off the debt and when they were able to work off the debt, then they were free. “When you buy a male Hebrew slave, he shall serve six years, but in the seventh he shall go out a free person, without debt” (Ex. 21:2). Cruelty on the part of the owner resulted in immediate freedom for the slave (Ex. 21:26-27). This made male Hebrew slavery more like a kind of long-term labor contract among individuals, and less like the kind of permanent exploitation that has characterized slavery in modern times.¹³

Sarah and Angelina Grimke were the first female abolitionists and the only women out of seventy who toured with Theodore Weld’s group in the 1830s to speak against the evils of slavery. Many people came to hear them speak; they had a large following because the Grimke Sisters were speaking against slavery, even though their family owned slaves. In addition, many people wanted to hear them because they were engaging in an activity that was forbidden to women in the 1800s. Women were not allowed to speak in public. Due to this, they were not just speaking for the cause of slaves, but also for the causes of women.

¹³ “Slavery or Indentured Servitude (Exodus 21:1-11),” Theology of Work, accessed August 19, 2019, <https://www.theologyofwork.org/old-testament/exodus-and-work/israel-at-mount-sinai-exodus-191-4038/instructions-about-work-exodus-201-17-and-211-239/case-laws-in-the-book-of-the-covenant-exodus-211-2333/slavery-or-indentured-servitude-exodus-211-11>.

The sisters were commended and, at the same time, opposed. Their biggest opponent came from the Council of Congregationalist Ministers of Massachusetts in the form of a Pastoral Letter. It reads:

We invite your attention to the dangers which at present seem to threaten the female character with widespread and permanent injury. The appropriate duties and influence of women are clearly stated in the New Testament... We appreciate the unostentatious prayers of women in advancing the cause of religion at home and abroad; in the Sabbath-schools; in leading religious inquirers to the pastor for instruction: and in all such associated efforts as become the modesty of her sex... But when she assumes the place and tone of man as a public reformer... she yields the power which God had given for her protection, and her character becomes unnatural.¹⁴

It is important to note that Sarah Grimke, who was the eldest of the sisters, had experienced firsthand discrimination and would quickly give a response to the Pastoral Letter. She harbored resentment in her heart about the way women were treated. Significantly, she never got over the fact that her brother, Thomas, was encouraged to pursue higher education; while, she was steered in a different direction at a certain age. As a child, her educational pursuits were applauded, but as Sarah got older, she was made to learn watercolors, French, the harpsichord and embroidery. Sarah wanted to study law but was unable, not because she was not smart enough, but because she was a female. Her response letter is addressed to Mary Parker, president of the Boston Female Anti-Slavery Society, and appeared in the *New England Spectator*. Her letter, "The Province of Women," states:

In contemplating the great moral reformation of the day, and the part which they are bound to take in them, instead of puzzling themselves with the harassing, because unnecessary inquiry, how far they may go without overstepping the bounds of propriety, which separate male and female duties, they will only inquire, "Lord, what wilt thou have me do?" They will be enabled to see the simple truth, that God had made no distinction between men and women as moral

¹⁴ Elizabeth Ann Bartlett, *Sarah Grimke: Letters on Equality of the Sexes and Other Essays* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1988), 2.

beings...whatsoever it is morally right for a man to do, it is morally right for a woman to do.¹⁵

Sarah continues her letter by listing all the injustices against women around the world. She references unjust laws against women as well as inequalities that women face in education and employment. Her letter also highlighted biblical justification for the moral autonomy and equality of women.

The Pastoral Letter was a catalyst for the Grimke sisters to aid in rectifying the plight of women. Along with being abolitionists and supporters of women's rights, they spoke out against the exploitation and sexual victimization of female slaves. "They also liken the plight of all women to that of slaves and continually defended the rights and duties of women as moral and intelligent beings."¹⁶ Sarah's argument was that slaves and women were both treated as inferior beings and deprived of basic liberties.

Angelina and Sarah Grimke became radical, outspoken abolitionists at a time when it was not seen appropriate for women to speak in public. They can be classified as ethical prophets in the tradition of Hebrew prophecy in the eighth century B.C.E. due to their belief that slavery was a moral issue, their sense of divine call to fight for the least of these, and their belief that God's people needed rise up to fight against the powers that use slavery to oppress others. Despite the spirit of the times and the strong opposition, they had the courage to speak God's truth.

As the prophets of the eighth century spoke out about God's demand for righteousness and justice, the Grimke sisters espoused a similar justice platform. Amos and Micah spoke ruin to Israel because of Israel's being more interested in having

¹⁵ Bartlett, *Sarah Grimke*, 2.

¹⁶ Bartlett, *Sarah Grimke*, 3.

religious feasts and conducting animal sacrifices than caring about those who were economically being taken advantage of and those who were living in poverty. Micah 6:8 it states, “He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does God require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?” The Grimke sisters took this scripture to heart and came to understand slavery as a moral issue that contradicted the will of God because God was a God of love and justice for all people.

Angelina inquires:

Can we love a man as we love ourselves; if we do, and continue to do unto him, what we would not wish any one to do to us? Look too, at Christ’s example, what does he say of himself, ‘I came not to be ministered unto, but to minister.’ Can you for a moment imagine the meek, and lowly, and compassionate Savior, a Slaveholder? Do you not shudder at this thought as much as at that of his being a warrior? But why, if slavery is not sinful?¹⁷

When addressing the inequality and ill treatment of women, Sarah Grimke made this statement, “We must first view woman at the period of her creation.” “And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing in the image of God created he him, male and female created he them.”¹⁸ Sarah Grimke made it clear that God made both male and female the same, in the image of God and that dominion was given to both to be over every creature, but not over each other. Both were created in perfect equality and they were expected to exercise the duty that was entrusted to them by their God, in harmony and love. They understand that the heart of the Gospel is love through study of the Word of God. Jesus said that all the

¹⁷ Larry Ceplair, *The Public Years of Sarah and Angelina Grimke* (New York, NY: Columbia Press, 1989), 51.

¹⁸ Elizabeth Ann Bartlett, *Sarah Grimke: Letters on Equality of the Sexes and Other Essay*. (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1988), 10.

commandments and rules in the Bible hang on two basic principles: love God with all your heart, mind, soul, and strength: (Matt. 22:37); and love your neighbor as yourself: (Matt. 22:39).

God shows humankind how to love. In Romans 5:8, “But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” In this verse and in John 3:16, no conditions are placed on God’s love for humanity. God does not say, “as soon as you get your act together, I will love you.” Also, God does not say, “If you love me, I will send my son to take your punishment for sin.” Instead, in Romans 5:8, we find the opposite. God wants us to know that His love is unconditional; therefore, God sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to die for us while we were still sinners. We did not have to get clean; and we did not have to make any promises to God before we could experience God’s love. Jehovah’s love for us has always existed, and because of that, He did all the giving and sacrificing long before we were even aware that we needed His love.

Accepting the love of God is accepting abundant life. God’s idea of an abundant life includes people and nature living together harmoniously in love, community, justice, health, and wholeness. If individuals genuinely love God and their neighbors, they will work to end racism, classism, sexism, militarism and the abuse of the ecosystem so that everyone will experience well-being.

The Grimke sisters felt an obligation to address issues of injustice because of their belief of how a Christian should live. In their letters, they clearly make an argument that when a person accepts God’s love then they can love themselves and love their neighbor accordingly. The Grimke sisters challenged their readers and those who listened to their lecturers to not just take their word for it; but to read about slavery, study the scriptures,

and pray over the subject to judge for themselves as to whether Jesus would agree with this brutal form of oppression.

The author Watchman Nee writes, “It is not just enough for someone to say I know the teaching of the body of Christ; that person also must have an inner awareness of such teaching to be able to carry out the responsibilities of one being in the body of Christ.”¹⁹ The Grimke sisters were aware that belonging in the body of Christ means that there is no individualism. They have a responsibility to the rest of the members in the body to operate in their spiritual gift(s). An ethical prophet has an inner urge to be the mouthpiece of God.

As Angelina states, “What then am I to do? The only relief I experience is in writing letters and pieces for the Peace & Anti-Slavery causes, and this makes me think my influence is to reach beyond our own limits.”²⁰ She expounds on the inner urging in an earlier letter noting that she was thinking about writing about Bible characters or even a small book on forgiveness, but the gnawing within her heart was leading her elsewhere. Her relief and happiness only came when she accepted the call and began to fulfill her God-given destiny. The call of God was so strong, that she declared, “O, sister I feel as if I could not only give up friends, but life itself, for the slave, if it is called for. The conviction deepens and strengthens, as retirement affords fuller opportunity for calm reflection, that the cause of Emancipation is a cause worth suffering, yea, dying for, if need be.”²¹ It is evident that Angelina had no doubt that God had called and

¹⁹ Nee, *The Body of Christ*, 6.

²⁰ Ceplair, *The Public Years of Sarah and Angelina Grimke*, 33.

²¹ Ceplair, *The Public Years of Sarah and Angelina Grimke*, 35.

commissioned her. She was aware of her belonging in Christ and due to this, she was confident that whatever she had to face, God would be with her; and therefore, she responded to the call. Sarah also had that same inward awareness.

Another way I see the Grimke sisters as being ethical prophets is through Angelina's claim that God need people to fight against the powers that use slavery to oppress others, "Act on this subject. Some of you own slaves yourselves. If you believe slavery is sinful, set them at liberty, undo the heavy burdens and let the oppressed go free."²²

In the book, *Daring to Speak in God's Name*, Mulligan and Burrows suggest, "the ethical prophet conveys the message that not only do persons need God, but also, God needs persons."²³ Angelina and Sarah were used by God to call on the southern women to take action by asking them to free their slaves. It was their hope that they would convince their husbands to do the right thing regarding slavery, share the horrific stories of slaves, write and protest slavery, and pray for the cooperation of English and Northern philanthropists. The sisters impressed upon them that it was their duty to work to set those that were demoralized free.

Lastly, the Grimke sisters are identified as ethical prophets because they chose to speak truth to the people. Most prophets of the eighth century were imprisoned, stoned, and even killed because they exposed and spoke against injustice. Being a prophet is not glamorous: however, a prophet is rewarding due to the rapport developed between the prophet and God. The prophet Jeremiah, who let the people of Israel know that there

²² Ceplair, *The Public Years of Sarah and Angelina Grimke*, 57.

²³ Mary Alice Mulligan and Rufus Burrow Jr., *Daring to Speak in God's Name: Ethical Prophecy in Ministry* (New York, NY: The Pilgrim Press, 1989), 123.

were prophets and diviners who were deceiving them by giving them a false word that their exile would not last long, declared, “For thus says the Lord, only when Babylon’s seventy years are completed will I visit you, and I will fulfill to you my promise and bring you back to this place.”(Jer. 29:11). This was not a word that the people wanted to hear, but Jeremiah had to deliver it anyway.

Angelina and Sarah also had to deliver a difficult message. During their lifetime, slavery and sexism were accepted, and those who helped slaves were considered law breakers. Those who broke the law were punished. The Grimke sisters understood the legal consequences, but they had chosen to obey God. Angelina announced, “The doctrine of blind obedience and unqualified submission to any human power, whether civil or ecclesiastical, is the doctrine of despotism, and ought to have no place among Republicans and Christians.”²⁴ The Grimke sisters also spoke the truth despite what their family believed. Their father owned slaves, and they had the courage to talk to him. Many of their friends and family opposed their radical speeches; however, it did not stop them from doing their part in the body of Christ. An ethical prophet is so connected with God and the cause, that they see no neutrality in the issue at hand. If a prophet is for justice, then it makes them sick to see any type of injustice. This is the way the Grimke sisters felt. They spoke God’s truth even to the religious leaders who disapproved of them speaking in public. Their allegiance was to God alone. In an appeal to the Christian Women of the South, Angelina avowed, “Count me not your enemy because I have told you the truth but believe me in unfeigned affection.”²⁵

²⁴ Ceplair, *The Public Years of Sarah and Angelina Grimke*, 59.

²⁵ Ceplair, *The Public Years of Sarah and Angelina Grimke*, 79.

The Grimke sisters did not let society define or limit what they would do or who they would be. They found their identity in God. After studying the word and prayer, they came to realize who they were and whose they were. Through daily communion with God, they walked boldly in their purpose.

Ministry takes courage. The Grimke sisters' represented Christ, not man, not institutions or companies. Humanity cannot wish to be popular or liked if they are to speak out against those who are being marginalized. The sisters took a clear stance on what they believed in and firmly declared why they believed it was so important. In addition, through their story, followers of Christ can learn that God will give strategies to address problems at hand. The Grimke sisters used the strategy of educating others that slavery and sexism was against God's will. They did this through lectures, letters, newspapers, speaking to relatives, organizing the women of the south, protesting legislators, and exposing the unfair treatment of slaves and women. With courage and spiritual resolve, the Grimke sisters have shown that ministry is getting out in the world and making the change that is preached and taught. It is no good to preach about "God will make a way somehow," if the minister, is not fighting the oppressive systems that are keeping "that way" from being opened.

Their story empowers people to love their neighbor so much that you will do whatever it takes for their well-being. Sarah and Angelina Grimke were frustrated and confused about what society said they had to be and believe. However, after reading, studying and interpreting the word of God for themselves and taking responsibility for their own soul, they became aware of their belonging in Christ. They realized that Christianity required a reverence for God and a willingness to work with God and fellow

believers to further righteousness. Through their obedience to do God's will, they were female abolitionist advocates and two of the earliest women's right advocates. They were very influential in getting the Thirteenth and Nineteenth Amendments passed. Their moral courage and activism led others to question their own attitudes and beliefs, and their example of servitude; it has empowered others to do the work of ministry.

Conclusion

Understanding awareness in Christ is key to a relationship with God. St. Augustine of Hippo, Angelina Grimke, and Sarah Grimke are figures in history who articulate a path of discovery resulting in their awareness of belonging in the family of God. In unique ways, Christ revealed to them their intrinsic worth. They understood that they were not bound by the social, economic, cultural, or gender restraints that society had constructed. Their awareness of belonging in Christ gave them a freedom that empowered them to find out who they were and what they were living for. They also came to understand that they were God's instruments to do God's work and speak out for Him. Despite the oppositions they came up against, St. Augustine of Hippo and the Grimke Sisters relied on the Holy Spirit to keep them focused on the call that God predestined for them to live out. They used their spiritual gifts to walk worthy of the calling with which they called. They exemplified Paul's appeal to the Gentiles in Ephesians 4:1-3, "So I, the prisoner for the Lord appeal to you to live a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." Through their lives, one can see how an awareness of belonging in

Christ can bring fulfillment, self-gratification, a connection to the community of God and glory to God. As one can see, this awareness grows and can become a great blessing that can ignite faith, inspire change and empower God's people to move beyond declaration to demonstration in doing the will of God.

CHAPTER FOUR

THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS

The research in this theological foundation examines belonging in Christ in order to educate, develop and empower church leaders to more effectively do the work of the ministry. The theological foundation of the project, “A Sense of Belonging: A Model for Church Leadership Development Utilizing Five-Fold Ministry Gifts,” focuses on the doctrine of Christ (Christology) and the doctrine of the church (ecclesiology). These theologies will support the hypothesis that if ministers and church leaders at the New Beginnings Fellowship Church become aware of their belonging in Christ, then this will bring unity of faith in Jesus Christ, spiritual maturity, and tools that will help them fulfill their God-given purpose. My hypothesis that this will, in turn, help members to discover their gifts in building up of the Kingdom of God.

Followers of Christ must have knowledge and understand their belonging in Him if they are going to fulfill their purpose as disciples of Christ and part of His church. They must also be aware that the spiritual goal is to obtain unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God in becoming mature and attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. When believers understand their relationship to Jesus Christ, their awareness increases leading to the revelation that the highest honor includes belonging to God in Christ, which provides Christians their identity. This identity is more than reciting facts and figures in the Bible, but also encompasses how one views God and

God's promises, and how one views one's relationship with Jesus Christ. This identity also impacts how one views oneself, one's understanding of the local church, and how one views one's relationship with others and the world. The *Merriam-Webster Dictionary* defines awareness as the quality or a state of being aware: knowledge and understanding that something is happening or exists.¹ Abraham Maslow, the American psychologist wrote, "What is necessary to change a person is to change his awareness of himself."²

The Bible declares, "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new" (2 Cor. 5:17). This scripture gives believers a new perception or awareness on who they are and whose they are when they accept Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. In Christ, Christians are given a new nature that is no longer a slave to sin, no longer self-righteous and no longer full of selfish living. God in Christ saves Christians and changes them from the inside out. Christians are redeemed and made holy daily. Christians are empowered by the Holy Spirit to be Christ like and to do the will of God. As Christians, who have a new nature, there is an inward desire to present their bodies as a living sacrifice to God, so that they can participate in Christ's redemption of the world. In addition, to belong in Christ is to have all the benefits of Christ flowing to and through them. It is imperative that church leaders are aware and can articulate that Christ as not just a person who acquired salvation, but He is the living gift of God. Believers can become one with the

¹ *Merriam-Webster Dictionary*, s.v. "Awareness," accessed January 20, 2020, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/awareness>.

² Asad Meah, "Twenty-Five Inspirational Quotes on Awareness," *Awaken the Greatness Within*, accessed August 25, 2019, <https://www.awakenthegreatnesswithin.com/25-inspirational-quotes-awareness/>.

Savior Jesus who was beaten, crucified, buried and resurrected and then ascended to the right hand of the Father is empowering.³ The Bible states, “Christ in you, the hope of glory” (Col. 1:27).

Christology

The Bible reads “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him” (Jn. 3:16-17). Why did God create within humanity a need for belonging? God’s purpose was to give humanity a yearning to become part of God’s family. Throughout the sixty-six books of the Bible, the central message is God wanting to restore God’s relationship with God’s children. Rankin Wilbourne said, “God’s original intent is [God’s] final intent: that the people of God might dwell in the place of God, enjoying the presence of God-this is the arc of the whole biblical story from Genesis to Revelation.”⁴ God desires to be in fellowship with God’s children and God’s children need to be in fellowship with their Creator. John Calvin, the sixteenth-century Protestant Reformer wrote, “The perfection of human happiness is to be united with God.”⁵ God unconditionally loved those God created so much that God had a plan of salvation to reconcile God’s children back unto Godself after sin entered the world through Adam’s

³ Marcus Peter Johnson, *One with Christ: An Evangelical Theology of Salvation* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Publishing, 2013), 17.

⁴ Rankin Wilbourne, *Union with Christ* (Colorado Springs, CO: David C. Cook Publishing, 2016), 83.

⁵ Johnson, *One with Christ*, 42.

disobedience and caused a separation between God and humankind. To accomplish this plan, God gave God's son, Jesus Christ as a sacrifice to pay for the sins of the world.

To understand Christ and how Christians belong in Christ requires a look to Christology. According to Stanley J. Grenz, "Christology is the study of the identity and mission of Christ whom Christians proclaim is Jesus of Nazareth. In Jesus, Christians find the self-revelation of God-God incarnate- and God acting definitively for the salvation of humankind."⁶ Theologians from the first century to present day are convinced that the historical events of Jesus of Nazareth witnessed and shared in the four Gospel narratives, give Christians affirmation of Jesus' deity.⁷ In addition, Jesus' claim of a special relation to his Father, which by Jesus' resurrection was confirmed by God supports the deity of Jesus.

The Historical Jesus

The Jews during the time of Jesus expected something great. The Romans oppressed them; and as a result, they greatly anticipated the Messiah that would come rescue and save them. Jesus was fully human. He lived in the flesh; He possessed a human body and mind. Jesus also experienced human wants and suffering, but He lived a sinless life. He was born a first-century Palestinian Jew in the town of Bethlehem but His Jewish parents, Joseph and Mary, reared Him in Nazareth of Galilee. In accordance to Jewish law, He was circumcised and named on the eighth day according to Luke 2:21. On the eighth day, when it was time to circumcise the child, His parents named him

⁶ Stanley J. Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God* (Grand Rapids, MI: Williams B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2000), 245.

⁷ Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God*, 249.

Jesus—the name the angel had given Him before He was conceived. Jesus’ name is a Greek form of the Hebrew name Joshua and means “God saves.” Jesus was a trained carpenter and His parents raised Him according to Jewish customs and laws. Therefore, at the age of twelve He joined the adults in the temple. Jesus was a faithful Jew by observing the Sabbath, participating in the synagogue, and communicating in a Jewish manner. Jesus humbled Himself before the law. Jesus began His Ministry at thirty years old declaring, “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised” (Lk. 4:18).

While doing the will of God, the devil constantly tried to attack and tempt Jesus. Many of Jesus’ own people did not accept Him and religious authorities were constantly challenging Him. His enemies ultimately arrested, tried and cruelly executed Jesus for his message and mission of His claim of being the promised Messiah. Jesus prayed in John: “O righteous Father! The world has not known You, but I have known you; and these have known that You sent Me. And I have declared to them Your name, and will declare it, that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them” (Jn. 17:25-26).

This passage showed that Jesus came to earth not just to preach about the Father’s love, but also to make this love known in humankind.⁸ After Jesus’ execution, God the Father, exalted Him by resurrecting Him from the dead, taking Him to heaven and seating Him at God’s right hand. One can see this in Hebrews, “For verily he took not on him

⁸ Wilbourne, *Union with Christ*, 168.

the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to god, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people” (Heb. 2:16-17). The Jews desired change in the Roman grip upon them and even desired a messiah but not the Messiah from God who would change the political, social, and spiritual systems. Jesus sense of belonging would challenge and disrupt the current spiritual status quo.

The Person of Christ

The council of Nicea in 325 CE declared that Jesus is both fully human and fully divine.⁹ In addition, the Chalcedonian Creed, created by 520 Bishops or their representatives in 451 CE, states that Jesus is both God and man with two distinct natures united “inconfusedly, unchangeably, indivisibly, inseparably in His one person.”¹⁰ Even Jesus proclaimed Himself as deity. John Stott’s book, *Basic Christianity*, he summarizes how Jesus, throughout the four Gospels, claimed His divinity.¹¹

Jesus claimed His divinity through His teaching, through the signs and wonders he performed, in those moments where He functioned like God, and through direct claims of divinity. Jesus had to re-educate people for acceptance of the new themes of His teaching because it was a profound contradiction to the accepted thought that was filled with exclusion and hypocrisy. As the Messiah, Jesus could teach a true sense of

⁹ Donald W. Musser and Joseph L. Price, eds., *A New Handbook of Christian Theology* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1992), 84.

¹⁰ Clark Williamson, *Way of Blessing: Way of Life* (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 1999), 211.

¹¹ Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God*, 255.

belonging for all. The so-called upper class and the well-known outcasts would now be able to experience the true sense of “divine belonging” by the unchangeable authority in the God-ordained personage of Jesus. Romans says, “For God does show favoritism” (Rom. 2:11).

His teaching format and styles were extremely controversial when compared to those of the pompous, critical and self-righteous attitudes of the spiritual leaders of that time. Jesus offered an unprecedented sense of belonging that invited all to come just as they were. His theology was accurate because He, God incarnate, taught all about God and with the authority of God. He used parables and examples that created opportunities for addressing all learning style.

The teaching of Jesus provided a visible sign of His authority causing people to recognize that He was more than just the son of Mary and Joseph as illustrated in Matthew. The gospel reads, “Coming to His hometown, He taught the people in their synagogue, and they were astonished. ‘Where did this man get such wisdom and miraculous powers?’ they asked. ‘Is this not the carpenter’s son? Isn’t His mother’s name Mary, and aren’t His brothers James, Joseph, Simon, and Judas?’” (Mt. 13:54-55).

Jesus claimed His divinity through signs and wonders. Jesus’ teaching ability impressed the people but good teachers were plentiful so they wondered what else He could do. Jesus was omnipotent, omnipresent and omniscient of how to go about implementing God’s new order and establishing himself as Messiah. The signs and wonders Jesus performed were so powerful and unbelievable that the thought of being a local sideshow or charlatan had to be eliminated. The Bible reads that, “The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from

God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him” (Jn. 3:2).

However, accepting Him as their Messiah created a sense of belonging that was too uncomfortable. The local spiritual leaders were now quite concerned and began seeking ways of eliminating the reality of His power, presence and purpose through entrapment and other means that failed miserably.

Jesus claimed His divinity when He functioned like God. Jesus functioned like God because of having been given all authority to do so by God. Matthew reads, “All things have been handed over to Me by My Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father; nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and anyone to whom the Son wills to reveal Him” (Mt. 11:27). As inclusive as Jesus had been with the people, He was also very exclusive as being the only one God gave the authority to rule and judge.

One of the benefits of belonging to Jesus as a Believer is knowing that Jesus has the power to forgive sins. The book of Acts reads, “Therefore let it be known to you, brethren, that through Him forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you and it is granted to all those who believe” (Acts 13:38). Having the power to restore human life was a powerful testimony that Jesus demonstrated for all to witness. However, Jesus made a legitimate claim of his ability to also give eternal life, which people had to accept by faith. This new proclamation truly challenged the thought process that belonging to Jesus brought eternal life after physical death. John 17:2 indicates that God granted Jesus authority over all people in order to give them eternal life.

Jesus also directly claimed His Divinity. The first miracle that Jesus performed was turning water to wine at a wedding in Cana. His mother approached Him regarding correction of the situation and Jesus responded initially by saying, “My hour has not yet

come” (Jn. 2). John states, “‘Woman, why do you involve me?’ Jesus replied. ‘My hour has not yet come’” (Jn. 2:4).

Jesus did not only declare that He was divine, but He also had names that reveal His person and work. As stated earlier Jesus’ name means “God is Savior,” which is believed to be His role as Savior of His people according to Matthew that reads, “And she will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for it is He who will save His people from their sins” (Mt. 1:21).

Thomas Bohache, author of *Christology from the Margins*, explains other titles of Jesus in his book, such as Messiah, Son of God and Lord. He states that Christ is the same as Messiah in the New Testament and it means “anointed one.” This title reveals that God appointed Jesus to do a job or service that only He could do. The Book of Acts says, “You know of Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit and with power, and how He went about doing good, and healing all who were oppressed by the devil; for God was with Him” (Acts 10:38). Jesus was part of the Godhead according to John where it reads, “Nathaniel answered Him, ‘Rabbi, You are the Son of God; You are the King of Israel’” (Jn. 1:49). Jesus is also referred to as Lord, which is a title. This title gave Jesus authority and showed His equality with God. Mark declares, “David himself said in the Holy Spirit, ‘The Lord said to my Lord, “sit at my right hand, until I put thine enemies beneath thy feet.”’ David himself called Him ‘Lord;’ and so in what sense is He his?’ And the great crowd enjoyed listening to Him” (Mk. 12:36-37).

John 3:16 profoundly establishes God’s everlasting love for humankind and, His desire for re-establishing a relationship with humankind would require a sacrifice that only His perfect Son, Jesus could fulfill. Humankind had received a verdict of death

based upon sin as issued in Romans 6:23 (ESV), “For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Jesus is the great liberator who provided eternal liberation that can be only attained through belief and acceptance in Him because of becoming the sacrifice that was pleasing to God. The performance-based requirements of the law could not accomplish what was necessary. Jesus took on humanity’s sins and suffered God’s wrath for their liberation. Romans 3:20 (ESV), “For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin.”

Jesus came to earth as fully God and fully human of which were attributes that were acceptable to God and created realistic opportunities for association of humankind as a carpenter and as the Messiah. While these titles were total opposites, they were necessary for the fulfillment of God’s purpose. Hebrews 4:15-16 states, “For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”

Musser and Price describe atonement as the reconciliation of sinners with God, especially through the cross, as communicated through the gospel and the sacraments.¹² Jesus, the son of God, was the promised Messiah which the Old Testament predicted and discussed. Jesus who knew no sin, became sin for humankind. He paid the penalty for sins by the shedding of His blood and carried out the atonement for all humankind. In Christ, humankind is united with God. God has adopted Christians as God’s sons and

¹² Musser and Price, *A New Handbook of Christian Theology*, 41-43.

daughters, and Christians are now full heirs of God's rich inheritance with all the rights and privileges as God's child. The author Marcus Johnson states, "The primary, central, and fundamental reality of salvation is our union with Jesus Christ, because of which all the benefits of the Savior flow to us, and through which union all the benefits are to be understood."¹³ Due to this fellowship, God deeply loves, cares and is duty bound to provide for the wellbeing of God's children. Kallistos Ware, an English bishop and theologian of the Eastern Orthodox Church, wrote: "Since man could not come to God, God has come to man, identifying himself with man in the most direct way. The eternal Logos and Son of God, the second person of the Trinity, has become true man, one of us; he has healed and restored our humanity by taking the whole of it into himself."¹⁴

This is how Christ reconciled the sinner back to God. Jesus dying on the cross bridged the gap between God and man. Galatians supports this belief, "But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons" (Gal. 4: 4-5). In Romans it states, "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Rom. 10:9-10). In order for humankind to be saved and connected back to God, there must be a confession of faith in Jesus. Without Christ, it is impossible to be a Christian. Unless one invites Christ in one's heart through faith,

¹³ Johnson, *One with Christ*, 29.

¹⁴ Alan Hirsh, *5Q: Reactivating the Original Intelligence and Capacity of the Body of Christ* (Atlanta, GA: One Hundred Movements, 2017), 63.

all what Christ accomplished on the cross and throughout His earthly life is useless.

Calvin, the great theologian stated:

First, we must understand that as long as Christ remains outside of us, and we are separated from him, all that he has suffered and done for the salvation of the human race remains useless and of no value to us. Therefore, to share in what he has received from the Father, he had to become ours and to dwell within us...for, as I have said, all that he possesses is nothing to us until we grow into one body with him.¹⁵

Through faith in the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ, persons become one with Him. For an individual to belong in Christ means that Jesus Christ and humanity are intertwined. Those in Christ belong to Christ and Christ belongs to them. Due to this, the same intimacy that Jesus experiences with God, humankind can also experience with God in Jesus. It is an indescribable relational intimacy that gives persons safety and complete access to God eternally. The greatest benefit of belonging with Christ is Christ.¹⁶ Understanding belonging in Christ helps persons to comprehend the infinite treasures of Christ, which amplifies the love and awesomeness of God.

In Christ

The New Testament does not extensively use the word Christian as one only finds the word used in three places.¹⁷ The Pauline phrase that is most used when referring to followers of Jesus is “in Christ.” This phrase, in conjunction with “in Christ Jesus,” “in the Lord,” and “in Him” appear in Paul’s letters 164 times.¹⁸ The significant amount that

¹⁵ Johnson, *One with Christ*, 23.

¹⁶ Michael Reeves, *Rejoicing in Christ* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press Academic, 2015).

¹⁷ Adam Sinnott, “A Theology of Union: What It Means to belong to God, In Christ, and Its Application” (master’s thesis, Reformed Theological Seminary, 2017), 15.

¹⁸ Johnson, *One with Christ*, 19.

the phrase “in Christ” was used with all its variations by New Testament writers clearly reveals that they believed that Christ was central to the Christian life and they wanted people to be aware of the gravity of belonging in Christ.

Figure 1. New Testament: “In Christ”

In Christ:

we are sons of God (Gal. 3:26)
 we have salvation (2 Tim. 2:10)
 we are not condemned (Rom. 8:1)
 we have the gift of eternal life (Rom. 6:23)
 we are redeemed (Rom. 3:34)
 we are justified (Rom. 3:24)
 we are free from the law of sin and death (Rom. 8:2)
 when we die we remain in Christ (1 Thess. 4:16)
 we are on body (Rom 12:5)
 we have life (1 Cor. 1:30)
 we are unable to be separated from God’s love (Rom. 8:39)
 we are made alive (1 Cor. 15:22)
 we triumph (2 Cor. 2:14)
 we have peace with God (Phil 4:7)
 we have been bought near to God (Eph. 2:13)
 we are a new creation (2 Cor. 5:17)
 we have liberty and freedom (Galatians 2:4)
 we will be made complete (1 Peter 5:10)
 we are blessed with every spiritual blessing (Ephesians 1:3)
 we are chosen (Eph. 1:4)
 we live for the praise of his glory (Eph. 1:12)
 we are his workmanship (Eph 2:10)
 we are his heirs (Eph. 3:6)
 we have peace that surpasses all understanding (Phil. 4:13)
 we have the mind of Christ (Phil 2:5)
 we have all our needs met (Phil 4:19)
 we have unmerited favor (1 Timothy 1:14)

Ecclesiology

Ecclesiology is the study of the church. Often churches are looked only as a mortared structure that consists of stain glass windows, pews, and pulpits. However, the church is much richer than items within the church. H. K. Gallatan defines the church as “the community of the Triune God, serving as the concrete manifestation of God’s eschatological kingdom in the world. It is the Ekklesia (assembly) in the New Testament often conveys the community of God’s people centered on Christ.”¹⁹ God created humankind to have a desire to belong to a community and to a family. To belong to God in Christ is to belong to others. The church includes the people of God because they have made the person of Jesus Christ, the Lord of their lives, and experienced a new birth. As a result of this new birth, the believer now becomes part of the Church universal. Known by many as the body of Christ, the Church is mandated to be witnesses of the risen Lord.

The New Testament speaks of the church as the bride of Christ (Eph. 5:31-32; Rev. 19:6-9). In addition, the church is a nation and a holy priesthood belonging to God in Christ (1 Pet. 2:9). Just like the people of Israel were God’s nation, the New Testament church is now able to partake in that relationship. Church leaders must be aware that belonging in Christ is both individual and corporate. The corporate relational and redemptive purpose of God is just as important as the personal relational experience humankind has with God. The Apostle Paul in Galatians 1:22 and 1 Thessalonians 2:14 refers to the church being or belonging in Christ. An awareness of this corporate belonging in Christ gives perspective on the local church, Christian responsibility to other Christians, and how Christians comprehend the redemptive story of God in Christ.

¹⁹ Daniel Treier and Elwell Walter, *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic Publishing Group, 2017), 181.

The word of God reads: “My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me” (Jn. 17:20-23). In this passage, Jesus prays to God to make His disciples and all believers one. This heartfelt prayer is a prayer of intercession for Christian unity. The church has been misunderstood as simply a location where Christians go to fellowship. The church is an embodiment of the very believers that make up the congregation. It is a living organism that has many parts that support one another in an organized system. God made God’s son, Jesus Christ, the head of the church, which is called the body of Christ. Christ has committed Himself to the body so that Christians may fulfill the great commission in Matthew which states,

Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I am with you always to the very end of the age (Mt. 28:18-20).

Williamson claims that:

The purpose of the church is that community of people called into existence by God, through the Holy Spirit, to live from and by the gospel of God, witnessing to the grace and command of the gospel as the call and claim of the God of Israel offered in Jesus Christ to the church on behalf of all the world, and doing so both to remind itself of what it is about and on behalf of the world that it might, one day, reflect the glory of God.²⁰

Williamson saying “community” is refreshing because the church is a community of believers. The church does not bring salvation. Salvation comes from confession and belief in Jesus Christ. However, the church community equips the saints for service to the body. Butler conveys three basic perspectives, which embrace most descriptions of

²⁰ Williamson, *Way of Blessing*, 257.

the church. First, the church is seen as the body of Christ; and a cluster of images exist in this context where emphasis falls on the head (Eph. 4:15-16), the members the body, or the bride to Christ (Eph. 5:22-31). The church is also seen as God's new creation (2 Cor. 5:17) or consisting of new persons (Eph. 5:7-9). Thirdly, the Bible describes the church as a fellowship of faith with its members described as the saints (1 Cor. 1:2), and the witness (Jn. 15:26-27) or the household of God (1 Pet. 4:17).²¹

The Duties of the Church

The church is commanded to preach, to proclaim the Kingdom of God, to evangelize by making disciples through teaching and training, and to administer the ordinances or sacraments (baptism and the Lord's Supper). In addition, John 1:27 talks of visiting the orphans and widows, while 1 John 3:17-18 expresses the importance of showing love not only in word, but also in actions and in deeds. The church is the representation of all that Jesus has done through His earthly ministry and His life lived out before God and humanity. Williamson supports this statement by stating, "The church testifies to God's purpose of bringing blessing and well-being to all of God's creation. Hence, the church is called to overcome in its own life all the obstructions of ethnicity, class, race, and gender that tear at the fabric of human community."²² Today some churches have become a hang-out spot or a place where the sermons do not challenge a person to be an extension of Christ. A church should constantly be working on its mission to the world.

²¹ Trent C. Butler, *Holman Bible Dictionary* (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 1991), 775.

²² Williamson, *Way of Blessing*, 253.

Jesus commanded his followers to “make disciples of all nations” (Mt. 28:19).

The proclamation of the gospel is the fundamental ministry of the church in the world. In conjunction with the work of evangelism, the church is to carry out a ministry of mercy that includes assisting the poor and needy in Jesus’ name. Jesus was the example for Christians as the gospels report that Jesus ministered to the multitudes that came to Him. The Church is called to be the “light of the world” and the “salt of the earth” (Matthew 5:13-14). In that light, Christians should not passively lag in the displaying of God’s glory to the world, but instead should lead the way. Some other descriptive words that Williamson uses for church are “the people of God,” “the body of Christ,” “communion of saints,” and “the fellowship of the Holy Spirit.”²³

“Extra ecclesiam nulla salus” is a Latin phrase, coined by the church father Cyprian, which means “outside the church there is no salvation.”²⁴ He believed that in order to enjoy Christ and His salvation, a person must be joined to Christ’s church because the two are so closely knitted together.²⁵ He states, “You cannot have God for your Father unless you have the church for your mother.”²⁶ Whatever your opinion may be, the word of God clearly states, in Ephesians 4:4-6 that the church is one body, one hope, one faith and one baptism. It is also one God who is ruler over all, works through all and is present through all because of what Christ has done on the cross. Christ gives gifts to the believers so that His ministry can continue in the world. The Holy Spirit empowers the believer to work to build up and develop the Kingdom of God.

²³ Williamson, *Way of Blessing*, 256.

²⁴ Johnson, *One with Christ*, 206.

²⁵ Johnson, *One with Christ*, 206.

²⁶ Johnson, *One with Christ*, 206.

The Church in Christ

To gain a better understanding of the function of the church, one should look at Jesus' ministry on earth. Jesus healed the total person, spirit, soul and body. Everywhere Jesus went He functioned as a healer, a deliverer, and a social reformer by teaching people to love God, themselves, and others. This should be the model followers of Christ emulate. In Luke it declares, "A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone who is perfectly trained will be like his teacher" (Lk. 6:40).

Conclusion

The infinite wisdom of God recognized the need for a true and divine sense of belonging during creation, which is illustrated in Genesis where it reads "Then God said, 'It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper'" (Gen. 2:18). God purposely created the solution regarding God's concern for Adam to experience a sense of belonging. The animals that Adam named experienced a sense of belonging, but Adam was totally unaware of the fact that he lacked another person with whom he could experience a sense of belonging. Therefore, God created Eve for Adam that began the reality of and need for humans to experience a sense of belonging.

Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines belonging as "a close or intimate relationship."²⁷ Believers experience that necessary sense of divine belonging as God's children as documented in John where it reads, "But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God" (Jn. 1:12).

²⁷ Merriam-Webster Dictionary, s.v. "Belonging," accessed December 1, 2019, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/belonging>.

Christians' sense of belonging to Jesus is trustworthy, not subject to change, and is founded upon everlasting love. This divine sense of belonging to Jesus is the only close and intimate relationship that is eternal and worthy of modeling.

Even one's theology, psychology, sociology and anthropology can connect with the reality of the need to experience a true sense of belonging, which is crucial, vital and necessary. The church, the body of Christ, has been given an awesome responsibility for creating and implementing a sense of belonging among believers. As stated earlier, followers of Christ must have knowledge and understand their belonging in Him if they are going to fulfill their purpose as His disciple and as part of His church. They must also be aware that the spiritual goal is to obtain unity in the faith and knowledge of the Son of God in becoming mature and attaining the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

Christians must experience the sense of belonging not only to and in Christ, but also to and in the local church to others. One should exercise caution when evaluating a church based only upon the size of the building and congregation. This is because the size of hearts of the congregation will truly determine their dedication to the fulfillment of God's vision and creating a sense of belonging that extends beyond its walls. Programs and other priorities have consumed the twenty-first century church to the extent that disconnection from following the model of the ministry of Jesus involving healing the total person, spirit, soul and body has taken place. The clarion call for the twenty first century Church is creating a realistic and functional need for the mandated sense of "Belonging" found in Romans 12:4-5 ESV which reads, "For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another." The diversity of the

body of Christ is a necessary reality in building the Kingdom of God; however, the sense of “Belonging” provides the attraction and energy promoting Romans 12:6-9 of which reveals, “Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith; or ministry, let us use it in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching; he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.” The sense of belonging among the body of Christ provides believers comfort in knowing that, while their gifting may be different, it is indeed vital for the Kingdom.

This project, “A Sense Belonging: A Model for Church Leadership Development Utilizing Five-Fold Ministry Gifts” was designed to become a tool for educating, developing and empowering church leadership to a new level of spiritual awareness and focus. The fruit of this new focus will ultimately create an intense awareness of a spiritual awareness that is beyond the ordinary. This new focus also leads to an extraordinary unity of faith in Jesus Christ and spiritual maturity that enhances opportunities for experiencing a true sense of identity and belonging in Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER FIVE

INTERDISCIPLINARY FOUNDATIONS

In order to completely address the issue of helping church leaders become aware of their belonging in Christ, it requires an interdisciplinary perspective, in addition to, the biblical, historical and theological perspectives. There are numerous sources and disciplines that provide a relevant understanding of the affects that a sense of belonging has on an individual's mindset, behaviors, motivations, health and emotions. This chapter provides a foundation that attempts to address belongingness and its affects. Aspects of social psychology will add to the understanding of my project, "A Sense of Belonging: A Model for Church Leadership Development Utilizing Five-Fold Ministry Gifts." Understanding this discipline and theory will further my ability to successfully address the problem at New Beginnings Fellowship Church. It will also assist with a few leaders and minister's frustration in finding their place in the church because they feel overlooked and alienated. Many times, the frustration results in disharmony, distrust and resentment among leaders.

By observing behaviors and concluding what motivation drives certain behaviors, thoughts and feelings, this field of psychology will not only inform the problem, but also provide solutions to the problem. The author Andrea Bonior writes, "Social Psychologist observe how humans interact with others, as well as study the ways in which the

circumstances of our environments shape our behavior.”¹ Being aware of the motivations that may influence behaviors at New Beginnings Fellowship Church, will assist in fulfilling the hypothesis that if church leaders become aware of belonging in Christ, they will be unified, spiritually mature, and obtain necessary tools for their God-given purposes. As a result, members will discover their gifts and assist in building up the Kingdom of God.

Definition of Belonging

The need to belong or what some people subscribe as belongingness, is also known as a human emotional and social need. It is a desire to belong, be loved, feel accepted and not be lonely.² Baumeister and Leary’s definition of the need to belong focuses on the motivation to form interpersonal relationships.³ In addition to desiring to feel supported and accepted from those in a group, family, organization, faith community, and world; an individual is conditioned to strive to provide a sense of belonging to others. To be socially accepted and to associate with others begins with an intrinsic motivation that comes from the need to belong. The dynamics of this need is unique to each person.

¹ Andrea Bonior, *Psychology: Essential Thinkers, Classic Theories, and How They Inform Your World* (Berkeley, CA: Zephyros Press, 2016), 155.

² Paul Kleinman, *Psych 101: A Crash Course in the Science of the Mind* (Avon, MA: Adams Media, 2012), 121.

³ Harriet Over, “The Origins of Belonging: Social Motivation in Infants and Young Children,” NCBI, accessed January 2, 2020, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4685518/>.

The Importance of a Sense of Belonging

The human drive to belong is what determines stable, long-lasting relationships with other people. Prehistoric ancestors had to be a part of a group or have close relationships in order to be able to survive. There was a great dependence on each other for hunting, fishing and gathering of food. Much of the labor was shared among the community. Sentinel duties were communal to protect against enemies and animals. Residing in a tribe or group helped people grow and succeed. It is ingrained in humans to be connected to others.

Abraham Maslow, a founding father and leader of humanistic psychology, introduced the world to his hierarchy of needs in 1943.⁴ Maslow claimed that a person's behavior is motivated by needs. Basic or physical needs are at the bottom of the pyramid. These needs include oxygen, sleep, eating, just to name a few. More complex needs are at the top of the pyramid. Psychological and social needs are toward the middle and are at the top of the pyramid.

Maslow believed that for a person to ascend the pyramid, they had to start from the bottom completing each level before progressing up. The levels from the bottom to top are physiological, safety, belonging, esteem and self-actualization. Belonging as one can see is at the middle of the pyramid. Therefore, after physical needs are met, Maslow says a person needs a sense of belonging which includes interpersonal relationships, affection and a sense of community.⁵ There are those who criticize Maslow's view that lower needs must be met in order for higher needs to be achieved. For example, a person

⁴ Over, "The Origins of Belonging," accessed January 2, 2020, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4685518/>.

⁵ Bonior, *Psychology*, 147.

who may be in poverty can have a great sense of belonging by being a part of a strong community or family. Despite, criticisms of the hierarchy of needs that Abraham Maslow created, his theories helped psychology focus on positive behaviors of humans instead of human illnesses and disorders. It is an important part of humanistic psychology.

Along with Maslow, there are other psychologist that share that humans have a fundamental motivation to be accepted and be a part of a social group. Psychologist, John Bowlby, researched and did studies on how people's lives are shaped by attachments that are created at an early age. Bowlby believed, "an attachment is a psychological bond between any two people and for a child to thrive and survive, it is ingrained in the child to create attachments."⁶

A sense of belonging plays a critical role in a person's life. A sociologist named C. H. Cooley, believed that self-concept is shaped by dealings with others. He argued, "We have no means of knowing our self except by observing how others respond to it, and we can be assure of ourselves only when we have had long experiences of a certain kind of response."⁷ Therefore, self-concepts are not only based on an individual's characteristics (individual self), but also on the attachments individuals form through relationships with others (relational self), and the social groups they connect with (collective self), thus, continuously navigating self-definitions between "I" and "we."⁸

⁶ Kleinman, *Psych 101*, 159.

⁷ Neal Krause and Keith M Wulff, "Church-Based Social Ties: A Sense of Belonging in a Congregation, and Physical Health Status," *International Journal for the Psychology of Religion* 15, no. 1 (2005): 73–93, accessed August 8, 2019, <https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=rft&AN=ATLA0001459937&site=ehost-live>.

⁸ M. B. Brewer and W. Gardner, "Who is This 'We'? Levels of Collective Identity and Self-Representations," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 71, no. 1 (1996): 83.

This is the reason why a person's view immensely affects how self is viewed. This is why a lack of belongingness can lead to depression, anxiety, grief and loneliness. It can also be a source of physical illness and lead to behavioral problems.⁹

The Need to Belong Theory

Unlike Maslow who did not place belongingness as a significant need, psychologists Roy Baumeister and Mark Leary's Belonging Theory suggested that the fulfillment of the need to belong is just as important as the physical needs of food and shelter. They state, "A minimum number of close ties are important for all human beings. The motivation to form and sustain at least a minimum amount of social connections is an influential human drive. It shapes emotion, cognition, and behavior. It explains self-esteem as an internal measure of one's chances of having good relationships."¹⁰ In their theory, two characteristics must be accomplished: "The first part is that people need to have positive and pleasant, not negative, interactions with others. The second part specifies that these interactions cannot be random but, should take place as part of stable, lasting relationships in which people care about each other's long-term health and well-being."¹¹ Baumeister and Leary argue that both criteria are required to fulfill the need of belonging. When there is an absence of either one of the criteria, then this threatens the psychological and physical wellbeing of an individual.

⁹ R. F. Baumeister and M. R. Leary, "The Need to Belong: Desire for Interpersonal Attachments as a Fundamental Human Motive," *Psychological Bulletin* 117, no. 3 (1995): 511.

¹⁰ Psychology, "Need to Belong," accessed January 2, 2020, <http://psychology.iresearchnet.com/social-psychology/interpersonal-relationships/need-to-belong/>.

¹¹ Psychology, "Need to Belong," accessed January 2, 2020, <http://psychology.iresearchnet.com/social-psychology/interpersonal-relationships/need-to-belong/>.

While older theories mainly focused on one-to-one relationships, more recent research has discovered that the need to belong can be satisfied by larger groups. People, especially men can feel connected to a large group, such as a Greek organization, company or university, just as much as intimate relationships.

Baumeister and Leary looked at the consequences if the need to belong was unmet. They researched the consequences of unmet need to belong regarding how it affected individually cognitively, emotionally and physically. Scientist believe that researching the negative outcomes gives meaningful scientific information that the missing piece (in this case, relationships with others) is essential for healthy functioning.¹²

Physically, Baumeister and Leary found through their research that the quality of a person's life is better, and the life expectancy is longer when a person is in a long-term caring, supportive environment. Studies show that married couples have better health than those who are single, divorced or unmarried. When a spouse of a married couple has cancer, then that spouse who has concern usually lives longer and even overcomes cancers more times than a single person. In addition, research has shown that people who are lonely and do not have a social network generally suffer with a weaker immune system that results in having more colds and flu.¹³ Long term exclusion or discrimination may cause a feeling of pain. It also can have detrimental effects on the body, causing high blood pressure, strokes, cardiovascular disease and mental health issues.

¹² Psychology, "Need to Belong," accessed January 2, 2020, <http://psychology.iresearchnet.com/social-psychology/interpersonal-relationships/need-to-belong/>.

¹³ Psychology, "Need to Belong," accessed January 2, 2020, <http://psychology.iresearchnet.com/social-psychology/interpersonal-relationships/need-to-belong/>.

The need to belong affects the mindset of a person cognitively. It is a factor that shapes human thought. Neuroscientists state that a person constantly thinks about others and their relation to others. Relationships help people interpret situations and events. They also have research that validates that social pain caused by exclusion can create a response in the neural processing system that is not so different from that caused by physical pain.¹⁴ When there is an unmet need to belong, people describe feelings that are felt with physical pain. In addition, the brain also releases dopaminergic responses in the striatum when a person experiences loneliness due to social rejection.¹⁵ This social rejection can either increase or decrease social motivation. Actual and potential relationships influence how people think.

The effects of the need to belong emotionally should not be overlooked. By belonging to a healthy group or relationship, it has been researched that it brings a feeling of happiness, security and feeling of being valued. By belonging to a group, a person feels that they are a part of something bigger than themselves. Adversely, when belongingness is unmet it often leads to negative emotions, including depression, anxiety, grief and loneliness. Many of these emotions can lead to behavioral problems ranging from criminality to suicide. Another feeling that is related to the lack of belongingness is jealousy. Jealousy is another negative emotion that is directly related to interpersonal bonds. It is defined as, “The feeling that someone is going to (or has) taken away something that one has and does not want to lose (such as a special relationship partner or a

¹⁴ Kelly-Ann Allen, “Making Sense of Belonging,” *Australian Psychological Society* 41, no. 3 (June 2019), accessed January 2, 2020, <https://www.psychology.org.au/for-members/publications/inpsych/2019/june/Making-sense-of-belonging>.

¹⁵ Livia Tomova, Kay Tye, and Rebecca Saxe, “The Neuroscience of Unmet Social Needs,” *Social Neuroscience*, accessed January 2, 2020, DOI: 10.1080/17470919.2019.1694580.

position).”¹⁶ In summary, the Need to Belong Theory has emotional implications of belongingness. It argues, “that real, potential or imagined changes in a person’s sense of belongingness will produce an emotional response.”¹⁷ Depending if the belongingness status is positive or negative will depend on if belongingness will increase or decrease.

Biblical

Roy Baumeister and Mark Leary’s Need to Belong Theory puts relationship needs as one of the most important needs that humans must fulfill. Baumeister and Leary share that satisfying the belongingness motive requires that two aspects of relationships be met. The first part is that people need to interact positively with one another and not in discord. In biblical times, one can observe disharmony between Jews and Gentiles. Pious Jews believed that non-Jews were ceremonial unclean. Due to their national heritage and religious ceremonies, such as being circumcised and maintaining strict dietary laws, Jews looked down on the Gentiles. This prejudice led to an attitude of resentment and anger amongst the two groups and caused great division.

The Gentiles who converted to be followers of Christ, felt ostracized from the Jews. They knew they were a part of the family of God; also, however, because of the Jews not accepting them and making them feel like they do not belong, it gave them a feeling of anguish and anxiety. These emotions coincide with the Need to Belong Theory.

¹⁶ Psychology, “Need to Belong,” accessed January 2, 2020, <http://psychology.iresearchnet.com/social-psychology/interpersonal-relationships/need-to-belong/>.

¹⁷ Baumeister and Leary, “The Need to Belong,” 505.

The theory states, “social exclusion may be the most common and important cause of anxiety.”¹⁸ This anxiety and uncertainty led to a change in behavior of the Gentile Christians. They were reverting to living like Gentiles. They were not morally living up to Christ-like standards; and they also were trying to separate themselves from Jewish fellow believers, by forgetting how God saved and delivered the Jews. The Apostle Paul address the situation in Ephesians 4:17, “Now this I affirm and insist on in the Lord: you must no longer live as the Gentiles live, in the futility of their minds.” This Epistle addresses these issues by explaining that Christ is the head of the church, which includes both Jews and Gentiles coming together united by Christ to be one body. By faith Jews and Gentiles were bonded together and share in the Messianic promise according to Ephesians 1:13 and 4:30, Christ bought Shalom out of chaos and hostility.

In Ephesians 2:14, is declares, “For Christ himself has brought peace to us. He united Jews and Gentiles into one people when, in his own body on the cross, he broke down the wall of hostility that separated us.” Christ out of two groups, created a single entity. He abolished the law and regulations; it was Jesus’ sacrificial death on the cross that reconciled the Jews and Gentiles. This group belong in Christ through faith. Church leaders who become frustrated or divided must realize that Christ came as the Chief Cornerstone to break down the wall of hostility and build a strong foundation that unites believers. To belong in Christ means being a part of something bigger than self. The calling for the body of Christ is unity that gives a sense of belonging because Christians are unified with the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit and with other believers. The Spirit of God brings about a oneness that transcends differences such as race, religion, cultures,

¹⁸ Baumeister and Leary, “The Need to Belong,” 506.

ethnicity, gender, economic and educational status, while embracing diversity. An awareness of a sense of belonging in Christ helps Christians respond to their calling. In Christ, they receive the fullness of the Holy Spirit on their lives. The Holy Spirit in turn brings unity with each believer because of their connection to God to whom they have all access. Through this, the church can grow and make disciples. Church leaders must be aware of their sense of belonging in Christ.

Historical

The Need to Belong Theory not only states that people need to interact positively with one another, but it also argues in the second part, that there is an interpersonal bond or relationship marked by affective concern. Baumeister states that the need to belong is a result of the human mind having a desire to want to understand large systems of meaning.¹⁹ Therefore, a sense of belonging is connected to a person desiring to have a meaningful life. A life of meaning is an understanding that a person's purpose is linked to others. Love, service and obedience are vital in the life of the body of believers. Paul encourages fellow believers to live a life worthy of their high calling as disciples of Christ.

Studying the autobiographies of St. Augustine of Hippo and the Grimke sisters, a person can learn how their search for meaning and purpose in life brought them to an awareness of who they were in Christ. The first item that a sense of belonging did is to provide them with firmness of their calling. Their calling was to love God with all their hearts. They understood that if one loves God with all their heart, then they have no

¹⁹ Nathaniel Lambert et al., "To Belong Is to Matter: Sense of Belonging Enhances Meaning in Life," *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 39 (2013).

choice to love God's people. This includes having feelings of tenderness, sympathy, compassion and soft heartedness for others. It also includes helping individuals create a shared social identity and pursuing collectively achievements that are worthwhile and have meaning.

St. Augustine's spiritual gifts of teaching and shepherding aided the body of believers to grow in their faith as well as helped them keep their biblical foundation pure amongst all the sects and false teachings. When Augustine became aware of Christ, he found out that his life was bigger than just him. His relationship with God was more than rules to be observed, but it was a connection with Christ to fulfill God's ultimate plan. Augustine is ascribed as saying, "A Christian is a mind through which Christ thinks, a heart through which Christ loves, a voice through which Christ speaks and a hand through which Christ helps."²⁰ St. Augustine, lifted up his social groups spiritually, mentally and emotionally. He understood that a sense of belonging is more than just what is known in a person's head, but it comes from a heart that is changed by Christ and flows out to others.

Angelina and Sarah Grimke are also wonderful examples of how the affective concern for others provided them with a sense of belonging. Angelina and Sarah Grimke grew up in South Carolina. They were considered socially excluded because in the 1800s, women were considered second class citizens. They were unable to vote, purchase their own property, they could not attend college, along with other things they were not permitted. They were also expected to be full time housewives, with the sole responsibility of caring for the children. Early in the sister's lives, they resented the

²⁰ Watchman Nee, *The Body of Christ: A Reality* (New York, NY: Christian Fellowship Publishers, Inc., 1978), 81.

limited opportunities that were given to women, especially Sarah. Sarah could not understand how her brothers were able to further their education and she could not. Sarah had dreams of being a lawyer. Sarah resented the control men had on women and this led her to never getting married. However, both sisters turned a negative into a positive. Instead of dwelling on the unfair treatment that was bestowed on them because of their gender and standing by and watching the brutal treatment of slaves, they looked to what God said about all God's children.

Sarah and Angelina studied the Bible and recognized that the hatred and discrimination that was happening among slaves and women were not pleasing to God. This led Angelina and Sarah Grimke to become radical, outspoken abolitionists and women rights proponents at a time when it was not seen appropriate for women to speak in public. Accepting the love of God is accepting abundant life. God's idea of an abundant life includes people and nature living together harmoniously in love, community, justice, health, and wholeness. If one absolutely loves God and their neighbors, they will work to end racism, classism, sexism, militarism and the abuse of the ecosystem so that everyone will experience well-being. Their story empowers people to love their neighbor so much that they will do whatever it takes for their well-being. Sarah and Angelina Grimke were frustrated and confused about what society said they had to be and believe; however, after reading, studying and interpreting the Word of God for themselves and taking responsibility for their own soul, they became aware of their belonging in Christ. This is a prime example how the Need to Belong Theory of affective concern aides in a sense of belonging.

Theological

The Need to Belong Theory proposes a need to form and maintain interpersonal relationships. Baumeister and Leary both subscribe, “that a desire to form and maintain social bonds would have both survival and reproductive benefit.”²¹

The study of the church is defined as Ecclesiology. Often churches are looked only as a mortared structure that consists of stain glass windows, pews, and pulpits. However, the church is much richer than items within the church. H. K. Gallatan defines church, “the community of the Triune God, serving as the concrete manifestation of God’s eschatological kingdom in the world. It is the Ekklesia (assembly) in the New Testament often conveys the community of God’s people centered on Christ.”²² To put it simply, it is a group of people who Christ lives in and works through so that Christ’s will can be done in the earth. Christ gave spiritual gifts of apostles, prophets, evangelist, shepherds and teachers to continue His mission. It is up to each office to do their part while working together as a whole for accomplishing the aim of equipping others to serve in ministry, for church growth, maturity for the purpose of becoming the fullness of God. The church or the body of Christ must maintain a close social bond to fulfill its God given calling. In addition, there is a real enemy named Satan whose mission is to kill, steal and destroy according to John 10:10. The Bible commands in Ephesians 6:11 to, “put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.” In addition, the body of Christ must maintain spiritual disciplines such as

²¹ Baumeister and Leary, “The Need to Belong,” 497.

²² Daniel Treier and Elwell Walter, *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic Publishing Group, 2017), 181.

worship, prayer, meditating of the Bible, serving, giving and fasting to survive in this journey called life and live the abundant life that God desire for His people to have.

Lastly, the body of Christ is mandated to reproduce, which is a benefit of social bonds. This reproduction is to make disciples for Christ. In Matthew 28:19, it declares, “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.” The social group of the church must stay unified in order to survive, thrive and replicate itself.

Also, the social bond of the church helps in maintaining good health. The body of Christ is a close family that looks out for others’ well-being. Due to this, research has proven that those who are in a church are healthier physically and mentally. According to a journal review entitled, “A Church Based Social Ties: A Sense of Belonging in A Congregation and Physical Health Status” by Neal Krause and Keith Wulff, the psychologists Baumeister and Leary assert that a desire to belong is very powerful because it is an important factor of social life. Psychologists throughout the years have shared that positive social ties lead to a productive life. It also helps with positive self-esteem and self-worth.

Studies that involve religion show this as true. National data survey shows that the length of time individuals affiliate with a congregation, the more they are likely to be recipients of support from their parishioners. Thus, theoretical rational shows that a sense of belonging of those involve in a church promotes better physical and mental health than those who are less involved. The Christian faith teaches that one should love one another, help those in need and forgive those who hurt us. These precepts are an outline on how one can have successful social relationships.

It is conjectured that negative occurrences of church members also affect health and break down a sense of belonging. The assertion that is hurtful or have negative occurrences in faith-based settings affect health are not statistically proven because most research has been focused on negative interaction and the psychological hurts. The data that has come forth is that belonging to a religious congregation brings about more contentment with a member's health no matter what state they are in because that member has a constant support system.

The final premise is that mankind desires to feel like they need to belong somewhere; and there is the need to be appreciated. This is one of the main purposes of organized religion; to impart a sense of belonging to the believers of God.

Dialogue-Scientific Model

The Dialogue Scientific Model of Integration will be used in conjunction with the Need to Belong Theory to engage biblical, historical, and theological foundations. The Need to Belong Theory and science can be a partner in addressing questions between science and religion.

Conflict, independence, dialogue and integration are four models used to understand the relationship and interaction between science and religion. These models were created by a theologian and physicist named Ian Barbour.

As previously described, the Need to Belong Theory by psychologists Roy Baumeister and Mark Leary, suggest that the fulfillment of the need to belong is just as important as the physical needs of food and shelter. They state, "A minimum number of close ties are important for all human beings. The motivation to form and sustain at least

a minimum amount of social connections is influential human drives. It shapes emotion, cognition, and behavior.”²³ Having a relationship with God and religious institutions can fulfill the need to belong.

In the article by Blessing Ajiboye entitled, “Jesus’ Model of Relationship: Its Psycho-Social Effect on Christian Ministry,” there is a dialogue between science and religion. Jesus was the best model on how to have relationships. When Jesus was on earth, he did much discipleship. Through his discipleship one can see the following:

1. Jesus’ model of relationship modeled harmonious living. There is no discord.
2. Jesus’ communication was clear without suspicion.
3. Godly relationship builds each other up and imparts life that points people toward Jesus.²⁴

In Christian ministry or those who belong in Christ, relationships are not short term but last for a lifetime. Those in Christ are obligated to live with others obeying the instructions that are given by God. Christianity is a life of service. Therefore, there must be other humans to serve because service cannot be rendered to self.²⁵ A society is needed if Christian ministry of fulfilling the mandate “go and make disciples,” will be achieved.

The church is a society or community within a community, where Christians can fulfill their purpose. Social ethics stresses that a society promotes, “interpersonal

²³ Baumeister and Leary, “The Need to Belong,” 499.

²⁴ Blessing N. Ajiboye, “Jesus’ Model of Relationship: Its Psycho-Social Effect on Christian Ministry,” *BTSK Insight* 13 (October 2016): 40, <https://search-ebscohost-com.utsdayton.idm.oclc.org/login.aspx?direct=true&db=rft&AN=ATLAI5IE181210001062&site=ehost-live>.

²⁵ Ajiboye, “Jesus’ Model of Relationship,” 35, <https://search-ebscohost-com.utsdayton.idm.oclc.org/login.aspx?direct=true&db=rft&AN=ATLAI5IE181210001062&site=ehost-live>.

relationships and promotes communal living.”²⁶ As a result, the church is a community where individuals have different spiritual gifts and belong to groups such as ushers, children’s ministry, women’s ministry, men’s ministry, evangelism team, and the choir. These groups provide nurture and help to mature the individual, as well as, be a social entity that works together to accomplish the vision of the church, spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ and do the work of service with the aid of the Holy Spirit.

Abjiboye argued, “The Godhead (Trinity) is a good example of a society knitted together in fellowship and working together to achieve a goal without conflict.”²⁷ The Bible according to 1 Peter 4:8-11 shares how those in a relationship or groups are supposed to maintain relationships:

Above all, keep fervent in your love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins. Be hospitable to one another without complaint. As each one has received a *special* gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. Whoever speaks, *is to do so* as one who is speaking the utterances of God; whoever serves *is to do so* as one who is serving by the strength which God supplies; so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever (1 Ptr. 4:8-11).

Godly relationships are never forced, but with time and effort they will grow and enhance spiritual growth, harmony, enthusiasm in accomplishing the communal goals, healing and well-being. On the other hand, relationships that are not cultivated the way the word of

²⁶ Ajiboye, “Jesus’ Model of Relationship,” 35, <https://search-ebscohost-com.utsdayton.idm.oclc.org/login.aspx?direct=true&db=rft&AN=ATLAI5IE181210001062&site=ehost-live>.

²⁷ Ajiboye, “Jesus’ Model of Relationship,” 28, <https://search-ebscohost-com.utsdayton.idm.oclc.org/login.aspx?direct=true&db=rft&AN=ATLAI5IE181210001062&site=ehost-live>.

God prescribes, can be fruitless, causing loneliness, depression, mental and emotional anguish, which leads to psychological warfare and psychosomatics.²⁸

The dialogue between The Need to Belong Theory and religion is that they both have knowledge about an individual's sense of belonging. Much of the truths in each field are similar. For example, both fields agree that belonging is just as important as physical needs, as food and water. They both agree that it is an intrinsic need to form interpersonal relationships. Belongingness shapes a person cognitive, emotional and behavior. In addition to desiring to be supported and accepted in a group, an individual is conditioned to strive to provide a sense of belonging to others. Also, belongingness or a lack thereof can affect a person's behavior negatively or positively. Lastly, they share in the belief that when belongingness is unmet it has psychological effects.

The dialogue can shift in similarities between the Need to Belong Theory and religion to differences when discussing the main concern related to belonging. *New York Times* bestselling author Brene' Brown argues "spirituality is recognizing and celebrating that we are all inextricably connected to each other by a power greater than all of us, and that our connections to that power and to one another is grounded in love and compassion."²⁹ Spirituality is connected to belonging. Relationships begin with God and will end with God. In the Bible, all through Genesis to Revelation a person can observe relationships. Relationships are represented between God and man, man to man and man

²⁸ Ajiboye, "Jesus' Model of Relationship," 39, <https://search-ebscohost-com.utsdayton.idm.oclc.org/login.aspx?direct=true&db=rft&AN=ATLAI5IE181210001062&site=ehost-live>.

²⁹ Brene' Brown, *Braving the Wilderness* (New York, NY: Random House, 2017), 35.

to animals. An awareness of belonging in Christ helps a person successfully navigate through all these relationships unlike The Need to Belong Theory.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the Need to Belong Theory by Baumeister and Leary informed the project, "A Sense of Belonging: A Model for Church Leadership Development Utilizing Five Fold Ministry Gifts," by assisting me in understanding belonging and how it shapes emotion, cognition and behavior. In addition, the theory informed theme of the two criteria needed to have belongingness.

The theory argues that there is a minimum number of close ties that are important for all human beings. The human drive is influenced by maintaining and sustaining a minimum amount of social connections. The first criteria of the theory states that people need to have positive and pleasant, not negative interactions with others. The second criteria argue that these relationships must be stable and long lasting. If one of the criteria is absent, then this threatens the psychological and physical well-being of an individual.

The Need to Belong Theory helps address the problem of those church leaders at New Beginnings Fellowship church who have feelings of frustration, anxiety or beliefs that they are being overlooked. The emotions they may be feeling are due to some aspect of belongingness is unmet in the Jeremiah ministry, which is our group of ministers. Understanding the source and the cause of the cognitive, emotional and behavior responses to belonging and feelings of exclusion, it can be addressed in a positive way by looking at how Jesus modeled relationships. The awareness of belonging in Christ is the

beginning of understanding true belonging. An understanding of who you are, whose you are and your connection to other people brings security, joy, and feelings of value. Godly relationships are never forced, but with time and effort they will grow and enhance spiritual growth, harmony, enthusiasm in accomplishing the communal goals, healing and well-being. On the other hand, relationships that are not cultivated the way the word of God prescribes, can be fruitless, causing loneliness, depression, mental and emotional anguish, which leads to psychological warfare and psychosomatics.³⁰

The Need to Belong Theory along with an awareness of belonging in Christ shapes the project and affirms the hypothesis that if church leaders become aware of belonging in Christ, they will be unified, spiritually mature, and obtain necessary tools for their God-given purposes. As a result, members will discover their gifts and assist in building up the Kingdom of God.

In fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Ministry degree and having completed the four foundations chapters, it is imperative to discuss how the synergy chapter along with the foundational chapters impact the implementation of the final project. The synergy chapter gave a glimpse of the problem of issues at New B, as well as, my personal issues. The foundational chapters assisted in giving clarity to the project and aided in forming the direction of the project so that the problem can ultimately be addressed.

The synergy chapter was the catalyst for distinguishing the theme of the project. It was clear that a “sense of belonging” is an issue that needed to be dealt with for me and others in the church. The lack of an awareness of self and how they fit within the ministry

³⁰ Brown, *Braving the Wilderness*, 39.

caused frustration and anguish. New B's vision is: New Beginnings Fellowship Church is a ministry that has been built on principles driven by the word of God. "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come" (2 Cor. 5:17). It is a place where those who are lost, troubled and broken can find strength and healing to their souls. Our environment is one where everyone can feel the love and warmth of God through the pastor, membership and the Holy Spirit. We are a people who honor God and meet the needs of God's Children with the highest level of excellence, integrity and respect.

In order to fulfill the God given vision, the church leadership must have an awareness of who they are, whose they are and how their gifts fit within the context of ministry. The ability to address this issue will ensure that the ministers will have a higher level of awareness and understanding regarding the power of belonging in Christ. This will assist church leaders by bringing unity of faith in Jesus Christ, building spiritual maturity, and incorporating teachings that will help them fulfill their God-given purpose.

I believe that I must teach church leaders to activate their gifts, as well as, members, so that the body of Christ can be effective and powerful in these last days. The sixth session Church Leadership Development Model will challenge, train, activate and eventually hold accountable the pastoral and ministerial staff to help shape others for the specific ministry that God has called them to by addressing a sense of belonging. My hypothesis is that if church leaders become aware of belonging in Christ, they will be unified, spiritually mature, and obtain necessary tools for their God-given purposes. As a result, members will discover their gifts and assist in building up the Kingdom of God.

The biblical foundation's chapter undergirds the final project. The focus is on the passage Ephesians 4:7-13. This text was considered for examination of helping to substantiate the argument for leadership development in awareness of belonging in Christ. In this passage, Paul shares the organization and the administration of the early Church. He also explains the purpose of leadership and lay members and how they are to define themselves and carry out responsibilities as followers of Christ. It aides in answering the following questions. What is the relationship between Christ and the Body of Christ? What difference does being aware of this relationship make in the lives of Christians? How does one activate the Body of Christ to accomplish its purpose?

The biblical foundation's account was extremely helpful in highlighting that the Spirit of God brings about a oneness that transcends differences such as race, religion, cultures, ethnicity, gender, economic and educational status, while embracing diversity. An awareness of a sense of belonging in Christ helps Christians respond to their calling. In Christ, they receive the fullness of the Holy Spirit on their lives. The Holy Spirit, in turn, brings unity with each believer because of their connection to God to whom they have all access. Through this, the church can grow and make disciples. Christians must be aware of their sense of belonging. Christians are a part of the body of Christ and Jesus Christ is the head of the body. He is in charge and Christ is both the goal and the source for Christian growth. Apart from Christ a Christian is unable to accomplish anything.

The historical chapter explored the autobiography of St. Augustine of Hippo and the Grimke Sisters. All three of these pioneers in the faith struggled in belonging in society. Through their autobiographies, I learned how their search for wisdom and purpose in life brought them to an awareness of who they were in Christ. Their newly

found self-awareness created a desire for a deeper relationship with God, revealing their spiritual gifts that were designed to serve others. This newly discovered, God-given calling ignited a high level of spiritual passion for discovering God's will and purpose for each of their lives. Before the revelation of their respective purposes, their lives were full of frustration and dissatisfaction. Walking in their calling brought them fulfillment, self-gratification, a connection to the community of God, and glory to God.

The takeaway from St. Augustine, Angelina and Sarah Grimke is that understanding awareness in Christ is key to a relationship with God. They all articulated a path of discovery resulting in their awareness of belonging in the family of God. Through their life one can see that Christ revealed to them their intrinsic worth; they understood that they were not bound by the social, economic, cultural, or gender restraints that society had constructed. Their awareness of belonging in Christ gave them a freedom that empowered them to find out who they were and what they were living for. They also came to understand that they were God's instruments to do His work and speak out for Him, despite opposition.

The theological foundation chapter was crucial because it explored and engaged the systematic theology of Christology and ecclesiology. To understand Christ and how Christians belong in Christ requires a look to Christology. According to Stanley J. Grenz, "Christology is the study of the identity and mission of Christ whom Christians proclaim is Jesus of Nazareth. In Jesus, Christians find the self-revelation of God-God incarnate- and God acting definitively for the salvation of humankind."³¹

³¹ Stanley J. Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God* (Grand Rapids, MI: Williams B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2000), 245.

The chapter emphasized how Jesus Christ redeemed humankind. Redeemed means to buy back or reclaim as one's own. Humankind owed a debt so deep and was in a place so low that the only way to get out of it was through slavery, bondage or even death. God saw humanity's condition and God loved God's creation so much that he did not want them to be oppressed and bound by sin. Therefore, God sent God's son, Jesus, to pay the price for sin by shedding His blood on the cross for our sins. Due to Christ purchasing humanity, we belong in Christ. Therefore, we are now united in the family of God and can walk in the freedom of being in relationship with God.

The second part of the chapter is the study of ecclesiology. Ecclesiology is the study of the church. God created humankind to have a desire to belong to a community and to a family. For one to belong to God in Christ is to belong to others. The church includes the people of God because they have made the person of Jesus Christ the Lord of their lives and experienced a new birth. As a result of this new birth, the believer now becomes part of the Church, universal. Known by many as the body of Christ, the Church is mandated to be witnesses of the risen Lord. It is important that Church leaders experience the sense of belonging not only to and in Christ, but also to and in the local church to others. Church leaders should exercise caution when evaluating a church based only upon the size of the building and congregation. This is because the size of hearts of the congregation will truly determine their dedication to the fulfillment of God's vision and creating a sense of belonging that extends beyond its walls.

Lastly, the interdisciplinary chapter continues the theme of belongingness by investigating The Need to Belong Theory. Psychologists Roy Baumeister and Mark Leary's Belonging Theory suggested that the fulfillment of the need to belong is just as

important as the physical needs of food and shelter. They state, “A minimum number of close ties are important for all human beings. The motivation to form and sustain at least a minimum amount of social connections is an influential human drive. It shapes emotion, cognition, and behavior. It explains self-esteem as an internal measure of one's chances of having good relationships.”³² In their theory, two characteristics must be accomplished, “The first part is that people need to have positive and pleasant, not negative, interactions with others. The second part specifies that these interactions cannot be random but, should take place as part of stable, lasting relationships in which people care about each other's long-term health and well-being.”³³ Baumeister and Leary argue that both criteria are required to fulfill the need of belonging. When there is an absence of either one of the criteria, then this threatens the psychological and physical wellbeing of an individual.

Learning about this theory helped in understanding what a person needs in order to feel belongingness. This will help in addressing the problem with the ministers and help in improving personal relationships so that no barriers can get in the way of individual's being their best self; and so that communal goals can be reached.

Each foundation chapter has been beneficial in assisting in framing a plan for implementing the project. The six sessions will consist of participants ranging from eighteen to eighty years old. The senior pastor and I will select license ministers to participate. During the six sessions, each participant will complete a pre- and post-

³² Psychology “Need to Belong,” accessed January 2, 2020, <http://psychology.iresearchnet.com/social-psychology/interpersonal-relationships/need-to-belong/>.

³³ Psychology “Need to Belong,” accessed January 2, 2020, <http://psychology.iresearchnet.com/social-psychology/interpersonal-relationships/need-to-belong/>.

questionnaire at the beginning of session one and the end of session six respectively. The pre- and post-questionnaires will be identical and will gauge the knowledge each participant gained during the process. Also, leaders will participate and take a spiritual gifts survey called APEST, which is from Alan Hirsh's called activating 5Q. APEST stands for the five-fold functions as outlined in Ephesians 4:1-16: apostle, prophetic, evangelist, shepherd and teacher. They will also participate in Bible studies, group discussions, and journaling.

CHAPTER SIX

PROJECT ANALYSIS

New Beginnings Fellowship Church is a sixteen-year-old non-denominational church located in Indianapolis, Indiana. It is a thriving church with four services on Sundays in two locations. In the sixteen years that New Beginnings Fellowship Church has been in existence, there have been fourteen ministers who left the ministry to start their own church. In addition, there are over four staff pastors and thirty licensed ministers. Some ministers expressed that they feel overlooked and alienated because they want to be used more in ministry, especially for preaching. These feelings have left them frustrated, which in turn has led to disharmony, resentment and jealousy. This project was formulated to address this problem.

New Beginnings Fellowship Church does not have an ongoing leadership development training model to grow leaders outside of a two-year Ministry in Training program for those who believe that they have been called to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ and a bi-annual two-hour leadership workshop. It is impossible for the pastor to give personal attention to the individual development of each leader.

In considering this problem as the catalyst for a leadership development model for ministers, to ultimately know their identity in Christ and to operate in their calling and giftedness in the church. This research project integrated learnings and insights from the biblical, historical, theological, and interdisciplinary foundations. The core content of the

leadership development study drew from these foundational sources. These discoveries and insights helped this project educate leaders in the church to understand their place in the body of Christ and at New Beginnings Fellowship Church. Even though the project's time frame was limited in time and content condensed, the analysis of the data and feedback from participants revealed that the participants desired to participate in further study.

The projected outcome predicts that those leaders identified and trained through the six session workshops will become more aware of their belonging in Christ. Another projection is that they will also understand their spiritual gifts according to Ephesian chapter four and how to use them in the church. In addition, they will become better equipped to help others for the works of service. The effectiveness of the model was evaluated by using data collection methods: pre- and post-questionnaires, individual ministry assessment and project evaluation.

Methodology

The title of this ministry model is, "A Sense of Belonging: A Model for Church Leadership Development Utilizing Five-Fold Ministry Gifts. This section of the chapter discusses the methodology and design used to help ministers and church leaders become aware of their belonging in Christ. This section discusses the research methodologies and why I chose them. I discuss the value of using a qualitative research, the objectives, the implementation of project and summary of learning.

I used a qualitative research method for this project. Qualitative research is defined as a scientific method of observation to gather non-numerical data, while

focusing on meaning-making.¹ This method was used to determine if objectives were made, it measures the effective of each session and evaluates the overall success of the project. The sessions were presented to a focus group of twenty-two ministers. All but three ministers had gone through New Beginnings Fellowship Church's two-year Ministry in Training Classes. The methodology consisted of a pre-questionnaire, post-questionnaire, APEST Personal Vocational Assessment, Bible studies, group discussions, activities to improve self-esteem, as well as self-identity, homework and journaling. The behavioral objective of this model was to accomplish several things. Each participant was encouraged to become aware of their belonging in Christ. Generating awareness was demonstrated by:

- a. Each participant will know who they are regarding their identity in Christ, whose they are spiritually and their responsibility in the Kingdom in God.
- b. Each participant will understand their APEST call and the different ways that they can function in their calling.
- c. Each participant will identify where and how they can serve in the church using their APEST calling.
- d. Each participant will become better equipped to help others develop their gifts for the work of service.

During the project, I served as the teacher for four out of the six sessions. The assistant to the Christian Education department taught one session and the senior pastor taught one session. In addition to teaching, I served as administrator and accessed qualitative data from all the participants. This research method was chosen because as the executive pastor, I understand that my call to ministry is to help bring structure to the church, to train leaders and to assist the senior pastor in carrying out the vision of the church. I also

¹ "Qualitative Research," Wikipedia, accessed February 10, 2020, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Qualitative_research.

believe that it is my ministry to teach the church leaders to activate their gifts, as well as, members, so that the body of Christ can be effective and powerful in these last days.

The qualitative research method provides flexibility when it comes to teaching the lessons. I can flow with the leading of the Holy Spirit or flow with the needs and questions of the participants. In addition, the qualitative research model does not bond a person to specific rules or procedures of conducting research either.

After observing and having conversations with a few ministers, I concluded that some ministers at New Beginnings Fellowship Church struggle with a sense of belonging within the church. As a result, a few leaders and ministers have become frustrated in finding their places in the church because they feel overlooked and alienated. Many times, the frustration results in disharmony, distrust and resentment among leaders. Therefore, I created a six-session leadership workshop design to equip, develop and empower church leadership to a new level of spiritual awareness and focus. It is my belief that by engaging in this research, I can successfully assist the ministers of the church in solving the problem of lack of awareness of their belonging in Christ. This new level of awareness will bring unity of faith in Jesus Christ, spiritual maturity, and tools that will help them fulfill their God-given purposes and, in turn, help members to discover their gifts in building up of the body of Christ.

The premise is that by studying through scripture, history, theology and science, the participants will be provided with a better understanding of the importance of having a vibrant relationship with Christ. This study will help them see as Christians, who have a new nature, there is an inward desire to present their bodies as a living sacrifice to God,

so that we can participate in Christ's redemption of the world. In addition, to belong in Christ is to have all the benefits of Christ flowing to and through them.

For the project, "A Sense of Belonging: A Model for Church Leadership Development Utilizing Five-Fold Ministry Gifts," there were six lessons that comprised the acronym "BELONG." Session one was (B) "Back to Basics: Overview of the Body of Christ and Our Responsibility." Session two was (E) "Equip for Service." Session three: (L) "Love: Accepting All Members of the Body and Appreciating Everyone's Gifts." Session four: (O) "One: Lord Make us One with Christ as Our Head." Session five: (N) "Nurturing: Learn and Develop your gift." Session six: (G) "Growth: Self and Others."

Stage One of the Project

This project was implemented in four stages. Stage One consisted of recruiting context associates and recruiting participants. To recruit context associates, I called each one individually and let them know that I was in seminary and that I needed context associates. I explained to them what the expectations were and the role that each one would be playing throughout the process. Next, the pastor and I met and discussed the project. We both agreed to reach out to those in the Jeremiah Ministry, which were our license ministers who completed the two-year Ministry in Training Course. An initial letter was sent detailing the project through email to thirty-five ministers. The participants were asked to respond if they were interested. The letter to the participants is in Appendix A.

Stage Two of the Project

Stage two consisted of a series of sessions that addressed being aware of participant's belonging in Christ. At the beginning of the first session, folders were passed out by an assistant. The folder consisted of the pre-questionnaire and the Human Consent Form. Each participant was given an overview of the project and assigned a number by the assistant that was unbeknownst to me. The questions measured participants knowledge of Ephesian the fourth chapter. The pre- and post-questionnaire is in Appendix D.

The sessions were presented in a Power Point Format by me. The assistant to the Christian Education department and the senior pastor used and distributed an outline. Power Points, outlines, group discussions and activities were also a vital part of the sessions.

Stage Three of the Project

Stage three consisted of participants taking the APEST Personal Vocational Assessment. The description of the APEST TEST is as follows: "The APEST assessment is a profiling instrument designed to assist in finding ministry styles in relation to the philosophy of the fivefold ministry of Ephesians chapter four (apostles, prophets, evangelists, shepherds, teachers). It has emerged from over ten years of practical application of this model in various ministry contexts."²

The APEST, both personal versions, was written originally in 2008 and 2009. The current deployment of the APEST was developed in collaboration by Alan

² "5Q What is APEST," The Forgotten Ways, accessed March 1, 2020, <https://www.theforgottenways.org/what-is-apest.aspx>.

Hirsch, Jeff Weber and Jonathan Reitz. The APEST Assessment is a reliable test that measures your behavior against the Five-Fold Ministry standards found in Ephesians chapter four. “APEST is designed to help people identify their natural, ministry motivation and expression in a given situation.”³

The participants were sent a link through their emails to access their individualized assessment. After they answered a series of questions, they were able to view their primary and secondary capacities. The report also gave characteristics, functions, blind spots and impact of each of the individual’s APEST calling. This served as a great tool to help the participant identify and understand the functions of their calling, as well as, positive and negative behaviors that they would become aware of.

I was also given a report of everyone’s APEST profile. This was essential because we (the senior pastor, pastor’s wife and I) were able to review all profiles. This gave more of an understanding of participants’ personalities and where they could best serve in the church.

Stage Four of the Project

Stage four consisted of a group discussion where everyone’s name was put under their primary APEST calling on the white board. The participants and I were able to review all the current ministries of the church to evaluate which calling would function best in them. Participants were given an opportunity to sign up for ministries that fit with their calling during that time. In addition to reviewing the ministries in the church, a

³ “5Q What is APEST,” The Forgotten Ways, accessed March 1, 2020, <https://www.theforgottenways.org/what-is-apest.aspx>.

further discussion was given on how their gifts are a part of who they are and how they can be used in their everyday lives.

After the discussion, I commissioned participant to utilize their APEST gift to live a life worthy of their calling and to be completely humble and gentle, be patient, bearing with one another in love. The participants were also encouraged to make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. After they were commissioned, I anointed each of them with oil and prayed for them. Lastly, the post-questionnaire and project evaluation were administered by my assistant. The questions served as a follow-up tool, to the teachings and strategies given to the participants throughout the six sessions. It also was a tool to evaluate if objectives were accomplished. Most of the questions were the same. The post-questionnaire included questions evaluating the project. A certificate of completion was given to the participants shortly after the post-questionnaire. The certificate is in Appendix H. I also conducted video interviews with some of the participants following the sessions. The video interviews served a tool to evaluate the project as well.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the methodology section of this chapter showed the design and process on how the project, “A Sense of Belonging: A Model for Church Leadership Development Utilizing Five-Fold Ministry Gifts” was carried out. It discussed objectives and this section also lifted the data collection methodologies, which consisted of a pre- and post-questionnaire and an APEST Personal Vocational Assessment, and Project Evaluation. Additional information in narrative format regarding the analysis of the

questionnaires as well as the implementation of the model will be discussed in the next section.

Implementation

“A Sense of Belonging: A Model for Leadership Development Study” took place for six sessions. The dates were October 23, October 27, October 30, November 3, November 6, and November 10 in 2019. The sessions were held on Wednesdays from 6:30 pm – 7:30 p.m. and Sundays from 9:30 am – 10:30 am. Participants were selected in this study because they were ministers at New Beginnings Fellowship Church. There were nineteen females and three males for a total of twenty-two ministers that participated in the study. During each session, attendance was recorded; and pictures were taken by a professional photographer. All participants were provided with name tags so that others could get to know each other on a personal level. At the first session, participants were given spiral notebook for journaling and a New Beginnings Fellowship Church folder that had the pre-questionnaire, Human Consent and a pen in it.

The leadership development study brought awareness of what it means to belong in Christ. After completing the six-session study the participants understood that the body of Christ is not only a principle or a teaching, but it is a matter of real inward awareness. When the participants understood the essence of the body of Christ, they were aware of whose they are and their responsibility to God and God’s people. They developed a knowledge of Ephesians 4:1-16 and how this scripture applied to them during this day and time. Participant also became aware of their APEST gift (apostle,

prophet, evangelist, shepherd, teacher) and how to use it at New Beginnings Fellowship Church.

This study included teaching, preaching and discussing through small groups. Daily journaling was also encouraged. These practices aided in the participants spiritual formation and invoked them to intentionally mentor and train others as they were trained.

Participant Demographics

The group consisted of all African Americans; three were males and nineteen were females. The age of the participants ranged from thirty-five years old to seventy years old. There were eight participants that ranged from thirty-five to forty-four years of age (34.8%). There were eight participants that ranged from forty-five to fifty-four years old (34.8%). There were four participants whose age ranged from fifty-five to sixty-four (17.6%). There were three participant whose age ranged from sixty-five to seventy-four (13.0%). Twelve of the participants were married (55.5%), while ten were single (45.5%). Two of the participants had been members of New Beginnings Fellowship Church between zero to four years. There were two that were members between five to nine years. Eleven that were members between ten and fourteen years and seven that were members for fifteen years since the church started. Lastly, the demographics recorded the length of time the participants have been in ministry. Four participants had been in ministry from one to four years (19%). Another six had been in ministry between five to nine years (28.6%). Six had been in ministry between ten to fourteen years (28.6%). Three participants recorded they had been in ministry between fifteen to nineteen years and two had been in ministry for twenty plus years (9.5%).

Session One

The Sense of Belonging Leadership Development Study began on Wednesday, October 23, 2019 6:30 pm in room 112 at New Beginnings Fellowship Church. I greeted everyone as they entered the room. The lesson subject highlighted the (B) in the word belonging. Therefore, the session was entitled, “Back to Basic.” In these sessions, I gave snippets from the biblical and theological foundation chapters. The objectives of this session were to help participants be aware of their identity in Christ. Participants were expected to identify behaviors that are associated with feelings of belonging and not belonging. Participants were expected to gain greater insight on understanding the doctrine of adoption. Finally, the participants were expected to affirm who they are in Christ.

To prepare for this session, I reviewed the biblical, theological and interdisciplinary foundational chapters. This information was shared through a power point presentation. There was a sign in sheet available on the podium for participants as they entered the room. As participants arrived, I greeted everyone. The session began at approximately 6:30 p.m. with twenty people in attendance. Everyone was welcomed and the group sang in unison “Victory is Mine.” After the soulful song was sung, I prayed and then gave an overview about the leadership development study. My assistant passed out folders and journals to everyone. The folders had the human consent forms, pre-questionnaire, and pen. The assistant assigned a number to each participant, unbeknownst to me in efforts to keep answers anonymous. The participant put their

number on their pre-questionnaire and filled out the forms and the assistant collected them.

The lesson was started by the recital of a poem “Wallflower,” by Lang Leav. Then I asked three questions: What does it mean to belong? How does it make you feel and behave when you do not feel like you belong? How do you feel and behave when you do belong? The participant’s responses were put on a white board and had a discussion.

After the discussion, I passed out hand-held mirrors to everyone and said, “Mirror, Mirror in My Hand, Who Does God Say I Am.” There was a list of scriptures listed in the power point. The participants picked a scripture and wrote in first person summarizing on the back of the mirror what the scripture says about who they are and how they belong to Christ. Participants shared what they put on their mirror from the scripture they chose, then they put their name on the front of the mirror. The mirrors were collected and returned to them in session six.

Next the topic of the doctrine of adoption was discussed, so that participants could understand how they belong to the family of God through Christ. To check for understanding, I asked participant, “How do believers belong in Christ?” Then I gave homework to write in their journal, read Ephesians fourth chapter and do APEST Vocational Profile. The link to the profile was sent to each person’s email and the session concluded with prayer.

Session Two

The Sense of Belonging Leadership Development Study session two was held on Sunday, October 27, 2019 9:30 a.m. in room Kingdom Center at New Beginnings Fellowship Church. Everyone was greeted as they entered the room. The letter (E) in the word belonging is the focus of this session. The session was entitled “Equip for Service.” The objectives were for participants to understand background information on Ephesians chapter four. Participants were expected to study Ephesians 4:1-13. Participants were expected to understand the goal of ministry. Participants were expected to understand the definition of equip. Participants were expected to identify the FiveFold Ministry (APEST) and know their function. Participants were expected to learn the difference between calling and function.

The session started at 9:30 a.m. with twenty-one people. I started the session singing the song, “Beloved, Let Us Love One Another.” After the song, a prayer was prayed, and each participant received one large red cut out heart. I had the participants put their name on the back of their heart. Each person had to write one positive word about each person. This continued until everyone had an opportunity to write on everyone’s heart. After everyone completed the task, I asked each person to look at their heart and write how it made them feel. They were given five minutes to share their response. Some responses were, “I didn’t know people thought of me like this. It makes me feel good.” Another participant cried when she saw her heart and said she would put it some place where she could look at it every day. Another participant said that he would begin sharing nice things to others more often.

After the activity, I shared background information on Ephesians and gave an overview on Ephesians 4:1-16. In addition, I went over apostolic, prophetic, evangelistic, shepherd and teaching gifts and their functions in the body of Christ. I had participants share the results of their APEST profile and what they learned about themselves. The questions that were asked were, what were some things that surprised them? What are behaviors that they must watch out for?

To evaluate if participants understood the lessons, I divided the group in seven groups of three and each group received a different question. The questions were, why did the Apostle Paul have to speak to the Gentiles in Ephesus? According to Ephesians fourth chapter, what exactly are we called to do and how are we supposed to act? What does equip mean? Who are followers of God supposed to equip? According to Ephesians the fourth chapter, what kind of gifts are given and by whom? What is the responsibility in the body of Christ? According to Ephesians fourth chapter, what happens when God's people operate in their gifting? What is the difference between function and calling? In Ephesians fourth chapter, what is the believer's connection to Christ?

After seven minutes of collaboration, each group read their question to the larger group and gave their answer(s). After this activity, I gave homework to research more about their APEST gift and its function(s). To conclude the session, the group recited the affirmation and prayer was given. The session was dismissed at 10:35 a.m.

Session Three

The Sense of Belonging Leadership Development Study session three was held on Wednesday, October 30, 2019 at 6:30 p.m. in the Chapel at New Beginnings Fellowship

Church. I greeted everyone as they entered the room. The lesson was taught by the assistant of the Christian Education Department. The letter emphasized is the (L) in the word belong and the word is love. There were nineteen people are in attendance. Three were absent. The objectives of this session were participants were expected to learn what it means to walk in love and why it is important if the mission of Christ is going to be accomplished. Participants were given tools on how to have unity with others. The outline in for this session in appendix G.

The teacher shared about the love of the Lord and how the body of Christ must walk in love if they are going to continue the mission of Christ. She explained the difference between unity and disunity. The lesson concluded with me and another staff pastor sharing how they overcame a conflict that they had by communicating, forgiving each other and walking in love. Participants were able to ask them questions. The homework was to work on mending broken relationships and to continue to write in their journals. The class was dismissed at 7:45 p.m.

Session Four

The Sense of Belonging Leadership Development Study session four was held on Sunday, November 3, 2019 at 9:30 a.m. in the Chapel at New Beginnings Fellowship Church. I greeted everyone as they entered the room. The subject of the session highlights the (O) in the word belonging. The subject title is ONENESS: Lord Make Us One. The objective of this session was for participants will learn about St. Augustine of Hippo, Angelina Grimke, Sarah Grimke. The life of these people was studied in my historical chapter. I shared how they did not look for a title or a platform, they just

wanted to serve God despite of the barriers that they were up against. They understood that belonging in Christ was bigger than them. Participants were expected to understand that the body of Christ is a system that must work as one.

The session began with twenty people in attendance. I asked four participants what God was saying to them through journaling. I shared the autobiographies of St. Augustine of Hippo, as well as Sarah and Angelina Grimke. Understanding awareness in Christ is key to a relationship with God. St. Augustine of Hippo, Angelina Grimke and Sarah Grimke are figures in history who articulate a path of discovery resulting in their awareness of belonging in the family of God, in unique ways. Christ revealed to them their intrinsic worth, they understood that they were not bound by the social, economic, cultural, or gender restraints that society had constructed. Their awareness of belonging in Christ gave them a freedom that empowered them to find out who they were and what they were living for. They also came to understand that they were God's instruments to do God's work and speak out for God. Despite the oppositions they came up against, St. Augustine of Hippo and the Grimke Sisters relied on the Holy Spirit to keep them focused on the call that God predestined for them to live out. They used their spiritual gifts to walk worthy of the calling with which they were called. They exemplified Paul's appeal to the Gentiles in Ephesians 4:1-3: "So I, the prisoner for the Lord appeal to you to live a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." Through their lives, one can see how an awareness of belonging in Christ can bring fulfillment, self-gratification, a connection to the community of God and glory to God. As one can see, this awareness grows and can

become a great blessing that can ignite faith, inspire change and empower God's people to move beyond declaration to demonstration in doing the will of God.

I opened with the song, "I need you to Survive." After the song, then the in-depth study of John 17: 20-21 began. During this session, oneness was defined. It was explained what oneness looks like in the Body of Christ. I showed how the body of Christ operates like a system. Also, it was discussed why it important for everyone to do their part and how the body of Christ can stay as one. Lastly, the goal of oneness was discussed. Questions were answered and the affirmation was recited. The session was concluded with prayer at 10:30 a.m.

Session Five – Taught by the Senior Pastor

The Sense of Belonging Leadership Development Study session five was held on Wednesday, November 6, 2019 at 6:30 p.m. in the sanctuary at New Beginnings Fellowship Church. I greeted everyone as they entered the room. The subject of this lesson highlighted the (N) in the word belonging. The session title is Nurturing: Learn and Develop Your Gift. Participants were extremely excited because the senior pastor was teaching. The senior pastor and I felt it was important for him to teach this class because this lesson would help with the minister's frustration of thinking that they should be used in one area like preaching. The senior pastor through this lesson taught they always should be working to better their gifts. Instead of becoming frustrated, keep growing. A person's gift will make room for them. The outline is in appendix G.

There were twenty participants in attendance, two were absent from the leadership development study. I also invited those in the new minister in training class. The

objectives were for participants to learn how to bring a level of balance between their spiritual growth and emotional growth? Participants were expected to understand the definition of nurturing, so that they can nurture their gifts. Participants were expected to gain knowledge how God nurtures God's children's gifts. Participants were expected to learn how to develop their gifts. Participants were expected to understand that their failures, success, good times, disappointments are all a part of the journey. They all recited the affirmation and the session closed with prayer.

Session Six

The Sense of Belonging Leadership Development Study session six was held on Sunday, November 10th, 2019 at 9:30 p.m. in the Chapel at New Beginnings Fellowship Church. I greeted everyone as they entered the room. The session highlighted the (G) in the word belonging. The session was entitled: Growth: Grow Self and Others. The session was a round table discussion. There were twenty participants in attendance; two were absent.

All participants names were put under their primary APEST gifting on the white board. The participants and I were able to review all the current ministries of the church to evaluate which calling would function best in them. Participants were given an opportunity to sign up ministries that fit with their calling during that time. In addition to reviewing the ministries in the church, a further discussion was given on how their gifts are a part of who they are and can be used in their everyday lives.

After the discussion, I commissioned participant to utilize their APEST gift to live a life worthy of their calling and to be completely humble and gentle, be patient, bearing

with one another in love. As well as to make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. After they were commissioned, I anointed each of them with oil and prayed for them. Lastly, the post-questionnaire was administered by my assistant. The questions served as a follow-up tool, to the teachings and strategies given to the participants throughout the six sessions. It also was a tool to evaluate if objectives were accomplished. In addition, a short five question project evaluation was given to evaluate the sessions. A certificate of completion was given to the participants shortly after the post-questionnaire. The certificate is in appendix H. A ten-dollar Walmart card was given to thirteen people for having perfect attendance during all six sessions. After the certificates were given out, a group picture was taken, and some video interviews were recorded.

Summary of Questionnaire

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, participants were asked to complete a ten question pre- and post-questionnaire to probe their feelings to see if they felt that they are being used at NBFC. In addition, there were questions that asked if the participant felt alienated or frustrated at NBFC. It also provided information related to their APEST gifting in accordance with Ephesians fourth chapter, and how they can serve in the church. Here is a summary of the results of the pre- and post-questionnaire that impacted objectives.

1. Do you feel that you can be used at your fullest potential at NBFC? Yes or No

Pre-questionnaire responses: out of twenty participants, five (22.7%) said yes, four (18.2%) said neither, which meant they did not answer the question, or they circled both yes and no. Thirteen (59.1%) said they do not feel that they were being used at their fullest potential at NBFC.

Post-questionnaire responses: twenty-one people out of twenty-two participants completed the post-questionnaire. Ninety-five percent of participants answered yes to number one in the post-questionnaire. It is my thought that after the study, the participants saw the different ways that they can serve inside and outside of the church. In addition, participants identified ministries within NBFC that they could use their APEST gift. Understanding their calling and function gave them a new perspective about ministry and being a part of the body of Christ. Participant number eleven who said no kept the same explanation from the pre-questionnaire. It states, "I feel that everyone should be used in praying at worship services on Sundays or Thursdays. In addition, they should be involved with other ministers."

2. Was there a time in your life that you felt like you do not belong whether in your family, church, job, organization etc.? If yes, how did it make you feel?

Pre-questionnaire responses: three participants stated no (14%) and nineteen participants said yes (86%). Those feelings that participants experienced such as they did not belong were worthless, not complete, withdrawn, unappreciated, ostracize, closed off, alone, obsolete, depressed, the black sleep and isolated.

3. What is the organization and administration of the early church according to Ephesians Fourth Chapter?

Pre-questionnaire responses: four participants (18%), knew that the answer was apostle, prophet, evangelist, shepherd, and teacher. Eight participants (36%) wrote an incorrect answer. Ten participants (45%) did not answer the at all.

Post-questionnaire responses: one hundred percent answered correctly by listing apostle, prophet, evangelist, shepherd, and teacher.

4. Does New Beginnings Fellowship Church (NBFC) provide opportunities and pathways for individuals to grow in their APEST gifting?

Pre-questionnaire responses: ten participants (50%) believe that NBFC provides opportunities and pathways for individuals to grow in their APEST gifting. Six participants (27%) circled no to this question. Five participants (23%) did not answer the question.

Post-questionnaire responses: one hundred percent said yes to this question. I believe the increase occurred because participants understood APEST giftings. Also, in session six, a round table discussion about how the participants could use their gifts at NBFC.

5. Who is the body of Christ and what is its purpose?

Pre- and post-questionnaire responses: one hundred percent of participants had an appropriate answer to this question on the pre- and post-questionnaire.

6. What is the relationship between Christ and the body of Christ?

Pre-questionnaire responses: sixteen out of twenty-two participants (73%) stated Jesus was the “head.” I recognized that the participants used words, such as leader, father, and groom of bride that signified being the head and they were accepted as appropriate answers. Two (9%) participants answered our Savior. One participant (4.5%) answered we live as one. One participant (4.5%) referred to Christ as the vine. One (4.5%) participant referred to Christ as the Spirit. One participant (4.5%) did not answer.

Post-questionnaire responses: Christ is the head was taught in the sessions. I was looking for the "The Head" or "Authority." Twelve out of twenty-one participants actually said the word "head " which is what the word of God says. Fifty-seven percent of the participants stated, "Head of the Body of Christ. Four participants (19%) appeared to not understand the question based upon their response. Three participants (14%) did not answer the questions. Two participants (10%) were not consistent with my expectations based on the teaching of the sessions.

7. What difference does being aware of this relationship make in the lives of Christians?

The pre-questionnaire revealed a lack of identity and understanding regarding the participants’ awareness of the relationship between Christ and the body of Christ in the structure of the church. The pre-questionnaire validated increased awareness of their identity and responsibility in the body of Christ. From the pre- to the post-questionnaire, the level of awareness moved from merely being an intellectual acquisition to becoming a

personal operational reality of actions that created a deep desire seeking meaningful change for fulfilling their purpose.

8. What is the difference between function and calling?

Pre-questionnaire responses: ten participants (45%) gave appropriate answer to the question. Twelve participants (55%) did not have the correct answers.

Post-questionnaire responses: sixteen participants (72%) gave the appropriate answer. Five (23%) did not have the correct answer. The definition that was taught from Alan Hirsh's book, 5Q. Function: The actions or activities assigned to a person, thing, or organization. Calling: What you are destined to do.

9. Do you know what your personal APEST (Apostle, Prophet, Evangelist, Shepherd, Teacher) calling is? YES or NO

Pre-questionnaire responses: question number ten on the pre-questionnaire asked the participants if they knew their person APEST calling? Three circled yes (13.6%) and wrote in the correct gift that matched their APEST profile, eleven said yes, but did not write down the gift (50%), and eight (36.4%) circled no.

Post-questionnaire responses: on the post-questionnaire, when asked do you know your personal APEST calling, out of the twenty-one who returned it, 100% circle yes and wrote the appropriate response.

10. What changes could you make to help those you lead to operate in a role that reflects their APEST call?

Pre- and post-questionnaire responses: answers included: Help people understand who they are in Christ. Help people discover their gifts. Help others nurture their gifts. Help them understand their APEST and get them involved in ministry. Be a great example. Show love. Make people feel like they belong.

APEST Assessment

The APEST Assessment as another evaluation tool that was used in this project. It is a ministry assessment emerging from the most comprehensive statement of ministry structure, that of Ephesians 4:7, 11-12.⁴ Alan Hirsh, author and professor, provided the thought and leadership behind this ministry assessment. I purchased the APEST Vocational Assessment for everyone to take online at <https://5qcentral.com/tests/>. This assessment helped the participants be aware of the engagement, health and development of all the APEST functions and callings. The following are descriptions of each gift as given by 5Q Central, the organization that provides the testing:⁵

The APEST gives explains the role of the apostle, prophet, evangelists, shepherds and teachers. Apostles extend the gospel. As the “sent ones,” they ensure that the faith is transmitted from one context to another and from one generation to the next. They are always thinking about the future, bridging barriers, establishing the church in new contexts, developing leaders, networking trans-locally. Yes, if focusing solely on initiating new ideas and rapid expansion, you can leave people and organizations

⁴ “APEST Assessment,” The Forgotten Way, accessed October 12, 2019, theforgottenway.org/user-report.aspx.

⁵ “APEST Assessment,” The Forgotten Way, accessed October 12, 2019, theforgottenway.org/user-report.aspx.

wounded. The shepherding and teaching functions are needed to ensure people are cared for rather than simply used.

Prophets know God's will. They are particularly attuned to God and his truth for today. They bring correction and challenge the dominant assumptions inherited from the culture. They insist that the community obey what God has commanded. They question the status quo. Without the other types of leaders in place, prophets can become belligerent activists or, paradoxically, disengage from the imperfection of reality and become other-worldly.

Evangelists recruit. These infectious communicators of the gospel message recruit others to the cause. They call for a personal response to God's redemption in Christ, and draw believers to engage the wider mission, growing the church. Evangelists can be so focused on reaching those outside the church that they neglect to mature and strengthen those inside.

Shepherds nurture and protect. Caregivers of the community, they focus on the protection and spiritual maturity of God's flock, cultivating a loving and spiritually mature network of relationships, making and developing disciples. Shepherds can value stability to the detriment of the mission. They may also foster an unhealthy dependence between the church and themselves.

Teachers understand and explain. Communicators of God's truth and wisdom, they help others remain biblically grounded to better discern God's will, guiding others toward wisdom, helping the community remain faithful to Christ's word, and constructing a transferable doctrine. Without the input of the other functions, teachers can fall into

dogmatism or dry intellectualism. They may fail to see the personal or missional aspects of the church's ministry.

After taking the APEST Assessment online, the results were sent to the participant and myself. The assessment gave a profile for the participants primary and secondary gifting and shared how they worked together. Also, it described the participants primary gift and secondary gift separately by giving attributes and scriptures that pertain to each. In addition, it lists characteristics, functions and blind spots that show immaturity. It also reveals the impact that participant's APEST gift can have in the body of Christ.

The results of the assessment revealed that six participants had the primary prophetic gifting (27%). Three participants showed they had the primary gifting of evangelism gift (14%). Seven participants primary gift was shepherding (32%). While six participants had the primary gifting of teaching (27%).

In addition, after taking the APEST Assessment, 100% of the participant could identify their gifting. This was an increase from 13.6% being able to identify their APEST gift before the study began.

This assessment tool made participants aware that they all have a place in APEST and can live out their God given purpose demonstrated through servanthood. As a result, all six participants who had the prophetic gift met with a community organizer. Faith in Indiana is an organization that is a vehicle for faith communities and people of good will to work together for racial and economic equity in Indiana. They stand up for justice and speak truth to power. The three participants that had the evangelism gifting, ironically, were not involved in the NBFC Evangelism Ministry. They were able to connect with

the Evangelism Facilitator who also was a part of the project. She signed them up for ministry and let them know when the evangelism team would meet.

In addition, four out of the six people who had the gift of teaching, had not gone through our Teacher Training Course. The assistant to the Christian Education Department also attended the project sessions. She immediately connected with the four ministers and scheduled a date in February 2020 to conduct the Teacher Training Course with them. Those with the gift of shepherding were given the ongoing assignment to provide care and look out for our staff members, ministry leaders, as well as teachers and administrators of the schools that partner with New Beginnings Fellowship Church partners.

Since the project, they have written encouraging letters and thank you notes to staff at one of the middle schools that the church partners with since the project ended. They also have text and written messages of encouragement to church staff, as well as, completed a project that connected with over sixty new members in January.

In conclusion, it was clear that the APEST Assessment provided an awareness of their APEST calling and function. The assessment went hand in hand with the biblical foundations chapter of Ephesians 4:7-13. It also served to prove the hypothesis that if church leaders become aware of belonging in Christ, they will be unified, spiritually mature, and obtain necessary tools for their God-given purposes. As a result, members will discover their gifts and assist in building up the Kingdom of God. Learning about their APEST gift and how it impacts the body of Christ, as well as, how it works with the other giftings, were catalyst to bringing unity of the faith. In addition, this assessment was a tool that helped participants know and understand who God made them to be, so

that they can fulfill their purpose. It is up to the participants to nurture their gift so that they can continue to grow and become spiritually mature.

Evaluation of the Project

At the conclusion of the session, participants were asked to complete a course evaluation. This evaluation was used to get feedback on the course content and presentation. The responses of twenty-one participants (one did not attend the last class to fill out evaluation) who completed the evaluation are as follows:

1. Has this class brought a greater awareness of your sense of belonging in Christ? Please circle: YES or NO

Table 1. Responses to course evaluation

Participant One	Yes	It was able to confirm how I fit in the body of Christ and what gifts God has placed in me.
Participant Two	Yes	It lets me know that God has a place for me in ministry and I now know, I am in the right place in ministry.
Participant Three	Yes	It taught me to that I must love those in my church family despite of; because there is a mission we must accomplish.
Participant Four	Yes	It taught me my role and how my gifts and talents apply to the body of Christ.
Participant Five	Yes	I now know where I fit in the body of Christ.
Participant Six	Yes	I know that I must acknowledge God and not worry about man and if he acknowledges me.
Participant Seven	Yes	This class has emphasized the importance of each member of the body of Christ role to maintain unity in the body of Christ.
Participant Eight	Yes	Just the whole process of spending time with God and learning my purpose.
Participant Nine	Yes	This was a great refresher. It was a “Reset” to get back to my purpose.
Participant Ten	Yes	We are all one body. We need each other’s gifts and strengths to edify and build the body of Christ.
Participant Eleven	Yes	This class has shown me that there are more works to be done in Him. And never doubt that I am not needed or a failure.

Participant Twelve	Yes	Knowing that the Body of Christ has many parts and the part that I do is of great importance, the body functions when each part works effectively.
Participant Thirteen	Yes	I have purpose, I belong and feeling oneness with God!
Participant Fourteen	Yes	I now know what it means to belong and that we all belong in Christ.
Participant Fifteen	Yes	I am aware that I belong to someone greater than myself and I should not feel alienated or alone.
Participant Sixteen	Yes	This study reaffirmed how we are all connected, yet unique in Christ.
Participant Seventeen	Yes	It has reminded me of who I belong to in Christ.
Participant Eighteen	Yes	These sessions encouraged me and gave me clarity. My calling is to serve God's people.
Participant Nineteen	Yes	It was helpful in knowing who I am in Christ and learning my gifts.
Participant Twenty	Yes	These classes have reminded me that I am the apple of God's eye, that He does know me and cares for me. I am reminded to pray and spend time with Him because He does hear my prayers.
Participant Twenty-Two	Yes	This study taught me that belonging is not just being here as a member, but being an active, functioning part of the body. I belong because Christ chose me.

One hundred percent of the participants stated they had a greater awareness of their sense of belonging in Christ after attending the project's six session. Each response reflected what was discussed in the leadership development study. By reading the participants comments, I can see that participants understood that their purpose is a part of a larger purpose. They are clearly aware they have a part in the body of Christ and must use their gift in unification with others to serve the people of God.

2. How does being aware of your belonging in Christ change the way you see and think about yourself and those around you?

Table 2. Responses to question about sense of belonging in Christ

Participant One	I see them as a part of a greater plan that God has established for His creation.
Participant Two	I was very excited, and surprised. Glad I took the class. It was encouraging too.
Participant Three	We are all called to the glory of God.

Participant Four	It gives me a new awareness of who I am and will grow to be.
Participant Five	That I am adopted by God and no one can take that away from me.
Participant Six	God chose me and that is all that matters.
Participant Seven	I have been graciously given a gift from God to edify the body of Christ.
Participant Eight	I think of myself totally different. I have more of a specific focus on fulfilling my purpose.
Participant Nine	It confirms that I am doing what He has called me to do.
Participant Ten	That we are all equal and we should greet each other with brotherly love.
Participant Eleven	This has changed me to see things and people the way God sees them.
Participant Twelve	Me being the best me as a part of the body of Christ helps serves God's purpose of bringing souls to Christ and fulfilling that goal.
Participant Thirteen	I matter, I belong to God, God loves me.
Participant Fourteen	I also have an important part and it matters.
Participant Fifteen	I see that I am alone only because I close myself off. I see that we are all adopted into the family by faith in God and that should make us connected in purpose to one another.
Participant Sixteen	Everyone of us has a special assignment!
Participant Seventeen	When the enemy tries to fill my head with something differently. I must remember who God said I am.
Participant Eighteen	I must delight more in God's word and God's love. I must be patient and trust Him.
Participant Nineteen	It gave me more understanding of my personality and gave me confirmation of my calling.
Participant Twenty	I am God's creation and His vessel. I must be obedient to His word so that I am ready. Ready to be used, ready for the work He has called me to. I must be ready not just for me, but to be used to impact those around me.
Participant Twenty-Two	That grace is for us all and that we all have purpose. God has given all of us a gift for His use and for the body.

This was a two-part question, however the majority answered on how they see themselves now that they are aware of belonging. Participant two and eleven did not answer what was asked of them. Participant one, three, twelve, sixteen, twenty and twenty-two understood the question. Their response suggested that they realized that all have purpose and gifts equally.

3. Are you aware how you fit and can serve at New Beginnings Fellowship Church? Please circle YES or NO

Table 3. Responses to question about fit and purpose

Participant One	YES
Participant Two	YES
Participant Three	YES
Participant Four	YES
Participant Five	YES
Participant Six	YES
Participant Seven	YES
Participant Eight	YES
Participant Nine	YES
Participant Ten	YES
Participant Eleven	YES
Participant Twelve	YES
Participant Thirteen	YES
Participant Fourteen	YES
Participant Fifteen	YES
Participant Sixteen	YES
Participant Seventeen	YES
Participant Eighteen	YES
Participant Nineteen	YES
Participant Twenty	YES
Participant Twenty-Two	YES

Out of the twenty-one participants who turned in the evaluation, 100% said they are now aware how they fit and can serve in New Beginnings Fellowship Church. This was an increase from pre-questionnaire when thirteen (59.1%) said they do not feel that they were being used at their fullest potential at NBFC. After the leadership development study, the thirteen participants are aware where they can serve.

4. How can this six-session study be enhanced?

Table 4. Responses to question about enhancing study

Participant One	It was amazing.
Participant Two	Continue to learn about your calling.
Participant Three	It was great.
Participant Four	I liked the flow and the amount of information
Participant Five	No answer
Participant Six	Would like more individual teaching on each role.

Participant Seven	Would like more teaching on the APEST gift and their function in the body of Christ.
Participant Eight	Would like to have the next level of learning.
Participant Nine	Not sure currently.
Participant Ten	I wish it were longer.
Participant Eleven	No answer
Participant Twelve	More time for class. Would like to be able to work collectively in small groups without rushing.
Participant Thirteen	Extend class sessions to one and a half hours or two hours
Participant Fourteen	Offer more sessions
Participant Fifteen	Give more homework
Participant Sixteen	More sessions!
Participant Seventeen	No answer
Participant Eighteen	More time.
Participant Nineteen	Have additional classes or follow up classes
Participant Twenty	Longer in duration
Participant Twenty-Two	I think it was great time management since it was only an hour class, needs work.

Three participants did not answer the questions (14%). One participant commented that they enjoyed the classes and follow-up classes. One participant suggested the sessions needed to give more homework (4%). One participant commented that they enjoyed the flow and the amount of information given during the sessions (4%). One participant answered the question by saying that they wanted to continue to learn about their calling (4%). Three participants replied that there needed to be more individual teaching on each APEST gift (14%). Three other participants commented that there needed to be more than six sessions (14%). Five participants said that classes needed to be longer, at least two hours (23%). Four participants commented that the class was great/amazing, and no enhancements needed to be made (18%). The feedback was helpful. I will use the information given to improve the leadership development study. Many of the participants shared that they enjoyed the sessions and thanked me for having the classes.

5. Please make any additional comments.

Table 5. Responses to prompt for additional comments

Participant One	No answer
Participant Two	No answer
Participant Three	No answer
Participant Four	No answer
Participant Five	No answer
Participant Six	No answer
Participant Seven	No answer
Participant Eight	Great Class-Great Opportunity
Participant Nine	Thank you for the invite
Participant Ten	I loved the course
Participant Eleven	I was blessed!
Participant Twelve	I would like to thank Pastor Alexia Ellis for this awesome training and pray God continues to use her in her calling as well.
Participant Thirteen	No answer
Participant Fourteen	Thank you
Participant Fifteen	Thank you
Participant Sixteen	Thank you
Participant Seventeen	No answer
Participant Eighteen	I had a spiritual awakening (as I do often) and blessings from this training.
Participant Nineteen	No answer
Participant Twenty	Excited about the additional leadership opportunity for Jeremiah Ministry.
Participant Twenty-Two	No answer

Twelve participants (51%) did not have an additional comment. Five participants (24%) said thank you. There was a clear appreciation for the course. One participant (5%) was excited about the additional leadership opportunities in the ministry. This is a result of this project making sure that everyone has an area that they can serve in. Two participants (10%) stated that the leadership development study was a blessing. One participant (5%) shared that it was a great class. Another participant (5%) shared that they loved the course. The additional comments were positive and showed that the leadership development study was informative and effective in the participants lives.

Video Interviews

There were several video interviews conducted after the fifth and sixth sessions. They were all asked the same two questions. Everyone articulated how they belong in Christ. Below are three ministers who participated in the video interview. I will share their answer to one of the questions.

Question: How have you been blessed by being in this leadership development study?

Participant S: “This class encouraged me and gave me clarity on how to serve God’s people and how to delight in God’s Word. It has been a blessing. I had some confirmations and some spiritual awakening. I have been touched and I am looking forward to continuing to grow and do what God purpose me to do.”

Participant C: “This class has given me a sense of belonging because it has given me a knowing that what I do in the body of Christ is impactful. Also, knowing that I belong gives me encouragement. I was made aware that the body of Christ functions better when I do my part. I will strive to function the best I can with Christ being my head.”

Participant A: “The leadership development study has been affirming for me. During this time, I have learned more and more about what God has called me to do, based on who I am in Christ. The process included many individuals in leadership roles. I was able to see that we serve the same God, but all have unique talents. Despite our unique talents and our uniqueness, we all work together to help the Kingdom and are still one body in Christ.”

The data from this project revealed that participants had acquired a new level of awareness of themselves, their God given callings and gifting in the body of Christ and building of His Kingdom. These project revelations created a spiritual energy for understanding that belonging in Christ is not static or sedentary. However, the true manifestation results in sense of spiritual desire to not only belong to Christ, but more importantly, to be longing with a heartfelt communal desire to serve God and His people with excellent.

Recommendations for the Future

Despite the success of the Leadership Development Study, there are areas of the project that could be improved that were stated by participants and realized after reflections. These improvements will be implemented into the model in the future.

The first suggestion is that each session should be longer in duration, possibly one and a half to two hours instead of just one hour. They felt that a lot of information was crammed into one hour. It would have been more beneficial if classes were longer so that participants could digest the information given. In addition, even though the ministers serve together in the church, it was realized that they did not really know each other. The longer sessions would give participants more time to really get to know each and bond, since they work together in ministry Sunday after Sunday.

The second suggestion given by many of the participants is that they desired more sessions on the APEST giftings. They wanted me to go more in-depth about each gift and their functions instead of a brief summarization. A better understanding of each gift

would help each participant's development and understanding of how their gifts work alongside other gifts to build up the kingdom of God.

The third suggestion was to have follow-up sessions. Many of the participants wanted ongoing development and accountability to make sure that they were fulfilling their call and operating with excellence spiritually, emotionally, and physically. Many of them who previously felt overlooked and alienated, felt excited that leadership was taking the time to help develop them.

During the administering of the project, I observed a strong desire from participants to learn more about their belonging in Christ. I would love to add at least two more sessions to emphasize the cost of belonging in Christ and how to deal with conflict in the body of Christ. These two classes are needed so that participants are aware that when you belong in Christ you are stepping into spiritual warfare. It is important that participants understand how to deal with the struggles and conflicts that will come, so that they can overcome them in a godly manner, so that service to the body of Christ would not be hindered.

I would personally change the majority of my pre- and post-questionnaire from being open ended questions like a four-point Likert scale (Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strong Disagree). This method would have provided a more succinct and concrete answers from the participants. The participants would have been forced to form an opinion because the scale does not have a safe 'neutral' option.

The participants were very appreciative of the sessions and thanked me for exposing them to the concept of belonging in Christ, as well as, to methods that would

assist them in developing themselves and others to serve at the highest level of excellence, integrity and respect for humankind.

The Need for this Study

A Sense of Belonging: Model for Church Leadership Development is an important study because we all have an identity, which is our perception of who we are. This leadership development model will help ministers to understand that their identity is in Christ so that they will not continue to seek for validation and their value from man, career, physical appearance or even in possessions. Humans are created by God to find that value, acceptance and belonging with God, in Christ. This will help ministers and church leaders to seek to be who they were born to be, instead of seeking a platform or a title. When a person knows who they are and whose they are, it gives them a level of confidence to be who they were born to be. St. Augustine of Hippo said, “Our heart is restless until it rests in you.”⁶

I am concerned that church leaders are not truly aware of the significance of their belonging in Christ. This leads to them not finding their place in the body of Christ because they do not understand who they are. Further, they do not understand their spiritual gift(s). I also believe that because leaders do not understand their own spiritual gift, they are challenged to help their associate ministers identify their spiritual gifts. This, in turn, prevents them from equipping others for the work of the ministry. If everyone uses their spiritual gifts, then the body of Christ will be built up and every need will be met. When people utilize their spiritual gifts, it produces maturity and stability in

⁶ Augustine of Hippo, *The Confessions of St. Augustine* (Hyde Park, NY: New City Press, 2002), 1.

the local church family. This leadership development model will show church leaders that they are just not believers in Christ. They are of the body of Christ. The body of Christ is a powerful system that carries out the mandate of Christ. Leadership within the body of Christ must be trained, so that they can train laity. Those who lead at any level of service need to be equipped and trained for their positions and such training must be intentional. This model for leadership development will help bring awareness and equip people for service.

Conclusion

As I reflect on the experience of this Doctoral Project at United Theological Seminary, so many thoughts enter my head. I remember how nervous I felt during my first intensive. I looked around the room and felt that I did not belong because I was a female and because I was not smart enough. These were all the insecurities that I grew up with because of what I either was told or experienced. This project, “A Sense of Belonging: A Model for Church Leadership Development Utilizing Five-Fold Ministry Gifts,” did not only address a need in my church, but it also addressed a need within myself.

During these three years, I realized that I had a battle going on in my mind. I know what the Bible says about me. I have purpose. I am fearfully and wonderfully made. I am accepted as the beloved; and that I am the head and not the tail. However, I really did not honestly believe it because my behavior was to shrink back; and my thoughts were consistent that I do not belong; no one understands me. After studying Ephesians, the fourth chapter and completing this project, I have discovered that I have

allowed some of my past experiences to give me a flawed perspective of who I am.

These influences such as unhealthy relationships, lies from the enemy, comments and projections from unhealthy people and even my own passivity and lack of confidence in myself have affected my perception of the essence of who I am.

After this research, I have a knowing and self-awareness that my identity is in Christ; and I belong in the body of Christ. God has placed the apostolic mantle on my life. My gifting is administration and helps. I belong at the table. This project has helped me accept myself for who God made me to be with no apologies. It has helped me accept the spiritual gifts that God has given me and love me; the person God created. Through the process of this doctoral project, I have learned to fight against the spirits of fear, depression and insecurity that was trying to control me. The project has also made me aware that my gifts are important and needed. I have a responsibility to do my part. This doctoral project has led me to a new level of wholeness and freedom as I am learning to exist in my God-given identity in Christ.

APPENDIX A
LETTER TO THE PARTICIPANTS



www.united.edu



4501 Denlinger Road • Dayton, Ohio 45426 • p: 937.529.2201

Implied Consent Letter for Participants

October 1, 2019

Dear _____,

You are invited to participate in a leadership development study that will bring awareness of what it means to belong in Christ. After completing the 6-session study, you will understand the following:

- The Body of Christ is not only a principle or a teaching, but you will discover that the body of Christ is a matter of real inward awareness. When you understand the essence of the Body of Christ, you are aware of whose you are and your responsibility to God and His people.
- Ephesians 4: 1-16 and this scripture applies during this day and time.
- Your APEST gift (Apostle, Prophet, Evangelist, Shepherd, Teacher) and how to use it at New Beginnings Fellowship Church.

It is my hope that the study will aid in your spiritual formation of and invoke you to intentionally mentor and train another as you will be trained. You were selected as a possible participant in this study because you are a minister at New Beginnings Fellowship Church.

If you decide to participate, please email Pastor Alexia Ellis, by Friday, October 18th. It is our prayer that all who are able, participate in all six sessions. The sessions will be Wednesdays from 6:30 pm – 7:30 pm and Sundays from 9:30 am – 10:30 am. The six dates are October 23rd, 27th, 30th & November 3rd, 6th and 10th.

During the first session you will fill out a brief survey before the discussion. No benefits accrue to you for answering the survey, but your responses will be used to ensure that leaders understand their spiritual gifts and are better trained to equip people for service at New Beginnings Fellows Church. Any discomfort or inconvenience to you derives only from the amount of time taken to complete the survey.

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will not be disclosed. Your decision whether to participate will not prejudice your future relationships with New Beginnings Fellowship Church. If you decide to participate, you are free to discontinue participation at any time without prejudice. Those who complete all six sessions, will receive a Walmart gift card.

If you have any questions, please ask. If you have additional questions later, contact Pastor Alexia J. Ellis at 317-891-3318 ext. 104 or aellis@newbindy.org.

Sincerely,
Pastor Alexia J. Ellis
Executive Pastor

APPENDIX B

HUMAN RESEARCH SUBJECT CONSENT FORM

Human Research Subject Consent Form

Project Title: A Sense of Belong: A Model for Church Leadership Development Utilizing Five-Fold Ministry Gifts

Investigator Director: Pastor Alexia J. Ellis

Institution: United Theological Seminary

Dates of Project: Wednesdays 6:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. & Sundays, 9:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.
October 23rd, 27th, 30th, November 3rd, 6th, 10th

Name of participant: _____
Please print first & last name

Are you aged 18 or older? _____ yes _____ no

Please read and initial each section below. Your initials indicate you have read and understood each section.

What is this research project about?

_____ In this research project, I am seeking to raise awareness about the believers' sense of belonging in the Body of Christ. Throughout this project, it is my intent to educate learners their role in the Body of Christ as well as how to be fruitful in in their Christ given assignments and be better trained to equip people for service?

What are the expectations for the human research subject for this project?

_____ You will be asked to attend six session during the above dates and time. Each Sunday session will be approximately sixty minutes long with ten minutes afterwards to answer reflection questions. Finally, a pre- and post-questionnaire will be given to be filled out.

Volunteer

_____ I volunteer to participate in this project as a human research subject. I understand that at any point in this project I can withdraw my participation without explanation. I understand that if I elect to withdraw my participation it will not have any effect my standing or leadership position at New Beginnings Fellowship Church. I understand I will not be compensated for my participation as a human research subject for this project.

Confidentiality

_____ My name will only appear on this consent form. This consent form, questionnaires, surveys and other methods used to collect data will be stored in Pastor

Alexia Ellis' locked file cabinet in the Pastor's home, located in Indianapolis, IN. All data collected will be shredded and or deleted after a five-year time period. I understand my name will not be associated with any questionnaires, surveys or publications. All questionnaires, surveys and publications will be assigned a pseudonym to protect my identity.

What are the risks for human research subjects?

_____ I understand that I will learn that Christ came to save me, and I belong to Him. I also will understand that the body of Christ is one, everything is done to bring God glory. The ongoing development of an awareness that I belong to the body of Christ and empowered by Him to do His will, will far outweigh any probable risks. However, I understand that I have the right to withdraw from the discussion, session(s) and/or the entire project. I understand that my withdrawal will not have any effect on my standing and or leadership position at New Beginnings Fellowship Church.

What are the benefits for human research subjects?

_____ I understand the benefits of participating in this project would include greater awareness of what it means to belong in the Body of Christ. More than this, the workshops will aid in my spiritual formation and invoke a desire to intentionally mentor and train another as I am trained. If I understand how and where I belong in the body of Christ, I will be more fruitful in my Christ given assignment and better trained to equip people for service.

If you have questions...please contact Alexia J. Ellis directly at 317-891-3318 Ext. 104.

I understand that by signing this consent form I acknowledge I have read, understand and agree with the terms as a human research subject. Although this consent form bears my signature, I understand I have the right to withdraw partially or entirely without explanation and at any time.

Human subject research signature

Date

Investigator/Project director signature

Date

APPENDIX C
GROUP COMMITMENT

1. Don't judge
2. Respect other points of view
3. Be considerate and allow others to speak and finish their thoughts
4. No side conversations while others are talking.
5. Be Honest
6. Accountability
7. Confidentiality

APPENDIX D

PRE- AND POST-QUESTIONNAIRE

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT STUDY

Demographic questions:

PLEASE CIRCLE

PARTICIPATE NUMBER:	MALE	FEMALE
LENGTH OF TIME IN MINISTRY:	MARRIED	SINGLE
LENGTH OF MEMBERSHIP AT NBFC:	AGE:	

1. Do you feel that you can be used at your fullest potential at NBFC?
Y or N
Explain:
2. Was there a time in your life that you felt like you do not belong whether in your family, church, job, organization etc. If yes, how did it make you feel? What did you do as a result of your feelings?
3. What is the organization and administration of the early church according to Ephesians 4?
4. Does NBFC provide opportunities and pathways for individuals to grow in their APEST gifting? Y or N
If so, what are they?
5. Who is the body of Christ and what is its purpose?
6. What is the relationship between Christ and the Body of Christ?
7. What differences does being aware of this relationship make in the lives of Christians?
8. What is the difference between function and calling?
9. Do you know what your personal APEST (Apostle, Prophet, Evangelist, Shepherd, Teacher) calling is? Y or N
10. What changes could you make to help those you lead to operate in their spiritual gifting so that they can have a sense of belonging at NBCF?

APPENDIX E
PROJECT EVALUATION

1. Has this class brought a greater awareness of your sense of belonging in Christ?
Please circle: YES or NO
If you circled yes, please explain how.

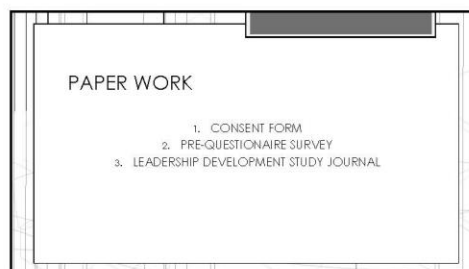
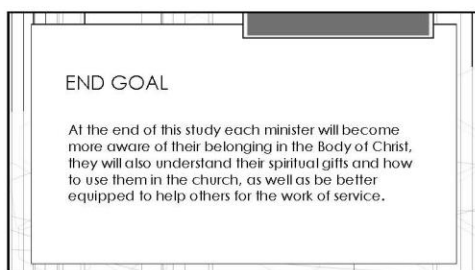
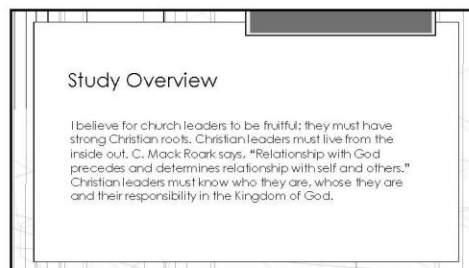
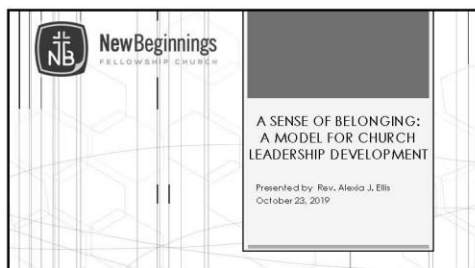
2. Are you aware how you fit in the body of Christ? Please circle:
YES or NO

3. Are you aware how you fit and serve at New Beginnings Fellowship Church?
Please circle YES or NO

4. How can this six-session study be enhanced?

5. Please make any additional comments:

APPENDIX F
POWERPOINT SLIDES



BELONGING

- What does it mean to belong?
- How does it make you feel when you feel like you do not belong?
- How do you feel when you do belong?

BELONGING

◦ Maslow's hierarchy of needs is a motivational theory in psychology comprising a five tier model of human needs. The need for interpersonal relationships motivates behavior. Examples include friendship, trust and acceptance, receiving and giving affection and love, attending being apart of a group (family, friends, church, work.)



WHEN YOU FEEL LIKE YOU BELONG, RESEARCHERS SAY

1. You develop strong relationships
2. Strong relationships improve the quality of your lives.
3. Strong relationships nourish you both physically and emotionally.
4. Strong relationships provide a sense of identity and security.
5. Strong relationships provide us with a greater capacity to manage stress and anxiety, making them essential to our health and well being.
6. A feeling of belonging helps you feel cared for and valued

WHO ARE YOU AND WHERE DO YOU BELONG

- MIRROR, MIRROR IN MY HAND,
- WHO DOES GOD SAY I AM?

WHO ARE YOU AND WHERE DO YOU BELONG

EPHESIANS 1:3-6
GALATIANS 4:4-5
ROMANS 8:14-15
JAMES 1:16
TITUS 2:4-5
1 PETER 2:9-10
DEUTERONOMY 7:6
ISAIAH 61:6
1 CORINTHIANS 6:19
2 CORINTHIANS 5:17-19
PSALM 24:1
1 CORINTHIANS 3:16-17

DOCTRINE OF ADOPTION

- THE DOCTRINE OF ADOPTION IS THE TEACHING THAT MAN IS ADOPTED BY GOD INTO THE FAMILY OF GOD. ADOPTION IS THE GRACIOUS AND MERCIFUL RIGHT BESTOWED UPON SINNERS THROUGH WHICH A PERSON IS GIVEN ADMISSION INTO GOD'S FAMILY.

GOD THROUGH CHRIST HAS ADOPTED US!

God did not adopt us on an impulse. This was at the very heart of God's plan. He "chose" and "predestined" according to His purpose of His Will. We belong to HIM

YOU BELONG TO THE BODY OF CHRIST


- YOU ARE NOT JUST A BELIEVER IN CHRIST, YOU ARE PART OF THE BODY OF CHRIST. THE BODY OF CHRIST IS A POWERFUL SYSTEM OF GOD THAT CARRIES OUT THE MANDATE OF CHRIST!

HOMEWORK

- WRITE IN YOUR JOURNAL
- READ EPHESIANS 4
- DO APEST MINISTRY TEST WHICH WILL BE SENT TO YOUR EMAIL

AFFIRMATION

- GOD LOVES ME SO MUCH THAT HE SACRIFICED HIS ONLY SON FOR ME. BECAUSE OF CHRIST, I AM ADOPTED INTO THE FAMILY OF GOD AND A PART OF THE BODY OF CHRIST. IN CHRIST, I BELONG, I AM SEEN, I AM VALUED. I AM A MASTERPIECE, I AM ONE OF A KIND. CHRIST HAS GIVEN ME SPIRITUAL GIFTS THAT WORK WITH THE BODY OF CHRIST TO DO GOOD WORKS. CHRIST EQUIPS ME USING HIS UNLIMITED RESOURCES. IN CHRIST I AM STRONG, I AM EQUIPPED, I AM QUALIFIED AND I WILL FULFILL THE PURPOSE HE HAS FOR MY LIFE FOR HIS GLORY!



New Beginnings
FELLOWSHIP CHURCH

**A SENSE OF BELONGING:
A MODEL FOR CHURCH
LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT**

Presented by: Rev. Alecia J. Ellis
October 27, 2019

Study Overview

Many scholars believe that Ephesians was a circular letter sent to the churches of Asia. It is debated that due to this epistle not addressing any specific problem in any church, it was written for general use. The reader sees the epistle of Ephesians was written to Gentiles according to Ephesians 2:11 which says, "So then, remember that at one time you Gentiles by birth, called, "the uncircumcision" by those who are called "the circumcision" a physical circumcision made in the flesh by human hands

Ephesians 4:17

• Ephesians 4:17 which states, "Now this I affirm and insist on in the Lord; you must no longer live as the Gentiles live, in the futility of their minds."

Jews and Gentiles are One in Christ

• The problem during this time was that Gentile Christians were not morally living up to Christ-like standards. They also were trying to separate themselves from Jewish fellow believers, by forgetting how God had saved and delivered the Jews. This Epistle addresses these issues by explaining that Christ is the head of the church, which includes both Jews and Gentiles coming together united by Christ to be one body.

Ephesians 2:14-16

• He Himself is our peace, who made both *groups into one* and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall, by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, *which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances*, so that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, *thus* establishing peace, and might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity.

One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism

Without unity in the faith, the church is deviating from God's divine plan and purpose. When there is a deviation in the plan of God it inevitably produces weakness, division, strife and fruitlessness. This is why it is important for church leaders to share with their members as Paul shared with the Gentiles in Ephesians 4: 4-6, "There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all."

Five Offices

- In Ephesians 4:11, Paul identifies the five offices and the explanation of each function and their contributions to the Body of Christ as they are empowered by the Holy Spirit. The offices are apostle, prophet, evangelist and teacher and will be discussed in detail below.

APOSTLE

- The Holy Spirit empowers the person who has the apostolic gift to understand the purpose of the church in the world and to make sure that the Body of Christ stays focused on God's mission. They help to oversee the health and organization of the church. Theologian Darrell Guder states, "It is this ministry that ensures that the church is always centered on its calling to be the agent and instrument of God's mission and that everything it is and does relates to and demonstrates that calling." Those who have the apostolic gift have an intrinsic desire to make sure that the church remains true to her calling. The church is an apostolic body which sends ambassadors in the world to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
- Hirsch, *50 Reconstructing the Original Intelligence and Capacity*, 89.

PROPHET

- Today as well as in the early church, those who have the gift of prophecy are often rejected and feel lonely because people would rather walk after their flesh instead of being obedient to the Spirit of God. True prophets listen to the voice of God and speak and act on His behalf no matter what. They hold themselves to a high moral standard and admonish people to walk in righteousness, holiness, faithfulness and obedience. They guard the hearts of God's people.
- Alan Hirsch shares, "The church is a prophetic community by its life and witness." Hirsch, *50 Reconstructing the Original Intelligence and Capacity*, 102.

EVANGELIST

- An evangelist was one in the early church who wandered from place to place like the prophet. They were the messengers spreading the Good News of Jesus Christ to a world that had never heard it. They were not welcomed highly as the Apostles who walked with Jesus. However, they desired to have direct messages from God for the people like the prophet. Evangelist were women who walked cities for the glory of the Lord. As in the face of Apostle Paul, the evangelist still has a special ability to communicate the Gospel to unbelievers. They proclaimed the Gospel in such a way that it inspired people to accept Christ. All Christians are commissioned to share the message of Christ as it states in Matthew 28:19-20, "Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Shepherd

- It is not that the word "pastor" is used. It comes from the Latin translation "pastor" which means "shepherd, shepherd (not meaning to "to protect")". One who leads, guides, protects the flock. In the Bible is Proverbs the evangelist, the teacher, the shepherd of the good shepherd who takes care of his sheep. Unlike prophets and evangelists, a shepherd/pastor did not wander in the early church. They were settled and served a body of believers. They were seen responsible for teaching, feeding, developing, protecting and helping people find their gifts. Those entrusted to them were valuable along with their growth in faith, development of gifts and fulfillment of their progress to the Body of Christ were of supreme importance. A formal definition of a pastor is given by C. Peter Wagner states, "The gift of a pastor is the special ability that God gives to certain members of the Body of Christ to assume a long-term personal responsibility for the spiritual welfare of a group of believers."
- C. Peter Wagner, *Ministry of Shepherding and Elders* (Harrisburg, PA: Shepherds Press, 1979), 41.
- C. Peter Wagner, *How Spiritual Gifts Work* (Chicago, Illinois: Crossway Books, 1979), 124.

TEACHER

- Those with the gift of teaching are concerned with discipleship and cultivating a biblical worldview. Ministry teachers are needed to share the wisdom and knowledge of God. They help the Body of Christ understand the truth about God, themselves and their purpose. Therefore, it is important that teachers study the Word of God and stay in tune to the voice of God because they can not teach what they do not know. They also must practice what they teach, because they cannot lead where they are not willing to go.

FiveFold Ministry

- The fivefold ministry gifts of apostle, prophet, evangelist, shepherd, teacher (APOST), helps church leaders understand the callings and functions of the offices of the church. Jesus modeled all five areas flawlessly during His earthly ministry. In Ephesians 4:11, Apostle Paul shares how working as one body, empowered by the Holy Spirit, can continue Jesus' mission to accomplish the goals that are listed in verses twelve and thirteen.

MINISTRY


- The Apostle Paul in the text, Ephesians 4:7-13, shared with new converts a guide for teaching the purpose of Christ in the church by making them aware of their identity as followers of Christ. Paul also illustrated how believers are to understand their God-given purpose individually and corporately. Paul further explained the roles of church leaders are used for equipping the church in accomplishing the ultimate mission of oneness in Christ. Paul makes it clear to the church in Ephesus that for restoration, perfection and healing to truly take place, the whole Body of Christ is needed. It is the birthright of the entire Body of Christ to do ministry.

Equip/Perfecting

- Verse twelve states, "For the equipping or perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." Here Paul shares with the early church about the aim and mission of APOST. The Greek word that is used for perfecting is the word "katasintomon." This word is used in surgery when a limb or a joint needed to be set back in place or mend what has been broken. In Mark 1:19 the word is defined as mending nets. The basic understanding of the word is to put a person or a thing in the condition that it ought to be. "Jesus gave the gifts of Apostle, Prophets, Evangelist, Shepherds and Teachers to the Body of Christ so equipped, so educated, so helped, so cured for, so perfectly joined together, so sought out when they go astray, that they become what they ought to be." Their aim is to make sure the Body of Christ is built up and strong. *—Bartley, The Letters to the Galatians and Ephesians, 176.*

AFFIRMATION

- GOD LOVES ME SO MUCH THAT HE SACRIFICED HIS ONLY SON FOR ME. BECAUSE OF CHRIST, I AM ADOPTED INTO THE FAMILY OF GOD AND A PART OF THE BODY OF CHRIST. IN CHRIST, I BELONG, I AM SEEN, I AM VALUED, I AM A MASTERPIECE, I AM ONE OF A KIND. CHRIST HAS GIVEN ME SPIRITUAL GIFTS THAT WORK WITH THE BODY OF CHRIST TO DO GOOD WORKS. CHRIST EQUIPS ME USING HIS UNLIMITED RESOURCES. IN CHRIST I AM STRONG, I AM EQUIPPED, I AM QUALIFIED AND I WILL FULFILL THE PURPOSE HE HAS FOR MY LIFE FOR HIS GLORY!



NewBeginnings
FELLOWSHIP CHURCH

**A SENSE OF BELONGING:
A MODEL FOR CHURCH
LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT**

Presented by Minister Patricia Gilbert
October 30, 2019

LOVE – Accepting all members of the
body and appreciating everyone's gifts

Ephesians 4 and 5 Overview

Recognizing what God has done for us
Ephesians 2:1-16

- A. God's work through Christ
- B. Unity and peace in Christ – Our position in Christ
- We know what it's like to not belong, we know what it's like to be on the outside.

Slide 3
AET - 10/30/2019

Having gratitude for what God has done for
us.

A. Walking worthy of what God has done for us

Walk Worthy of your calling


- I. With all lowliness and meekness
- II. Longsuffering
- III. Forbearing one another in love
- IV. Endeavoring to keep the unity

UNITY OF THE BODY

- Exhortation Ephesian 4:1-6
- Different Gifts Ephesians 4:7-10
- Purpose of Gifts Ephesians 4:11-16
- Disunity vs. Unity Ephesians 4:17

AFFIRMATION

- GOD LOVES ME SO MUCH THAT HE SACRIFICED HIS ONLY SON FOR ME. BECAUSE OF CHRIST, I AM ADOPTED INTO THE FAMILY OF GOD AND A PART OF THE BODY OF CHRIST. IN CHRIST, I BELONG, I AM SEEN, I AM VALUED, I AM A MASTERPIECE, I AM ONE OF A KIND. CHRIST HAS GIVEN ME SPIRITUAL GIFTS THAT WORK WITH THE BODY OF CHRIST TO DO GOOD WORKS. CHRIST EQUIPS ME USING HIS UNLIMITED RESOURCES. IN CHRIST I AM STRONG, I AM EQUIPPED, I AM QUALIFIED AND I WILL FULFILL THE PURPOSE HE HAS FOR MY LIFE FOR HIS GLORY!



New Beginnings
FELLOWSHIP CHURCH

**A SENSE OF BELONGING:
A MODEL FOR CHURCH
LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT**

Presented by: Rev. Alecia J. Ellis
November 3, 2019

MAKE US ONE

Now let's read John 17:20-21. "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word, that they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us, that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." The Lord goes beyond the eleven disciples here and prays for all those who would come to Him through the word of the disciples. He is now praying for all believers everywhere. His desire is the same, "That they all may be one, as thou, Father, are in me, and I in thee." The Lord desires that same "oneness" for us today. When we walk in the truth of this "oneness" the world will recognize that God, indeed, sent His Son.

Oneness

- o a: SINGLENES
- o b: INTEGRITY, WHOLENESS
- o c: HARMONY
- o d: SAMENESS, IDENTITY
- o e: UNITY, UNION

Oneness is God Himself

- o Oneness is when God has His absolute place in us.
- o Oneness is when He alone is in all, when He fills all.

HARMONY

- o When the children of God are filled with God, they harmonize with one another.

Romans 12:4-5 King James Version (KJV)

- o * For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office:
- o * So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.

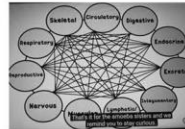
SYSTEM

- A system can be defined as a dynamic of interacting, interrelated, or interdependent elements forming a complex whole. As in all living bodies each vital part is inextricably linked to the other.

Our Human Body Has 11 SYSTEMS

- Circulatory System
- Digestive System
- Endocrine System
- Excretory System
- Integumentary System
- Lymphatic System
- Muscular System
- Nervous System
- Reproductive System
- Respiratory System
- Skeletal System

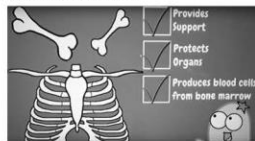
The Systems of the Body



When you Shout what happens?



The Skeletal System



THE BODY OF CHRIST

Each individual's gift enriches, counterbalances, "corrects" the particular bias of each of the other roles. Each function actually needs the other to be itself.

• When every member does their part as they should, we will function according to our true nature. There will be love and harmony.

To the one who lives for the Lord and is delivered from self, the most important part of his external life is that he might manifest his function in the church.

HOW TO STAY ONE

LOVE THE BRETHERN
NO DIVISION
WATCH OUT FOR THE SPIRIT OF INDIVIDUALISM
SEE THE NEED FOR FELLOWSHIP
LEARN TO BE A MEMBER
SUBMIT TO AUTHORITY

THE GOAL

WHEN WE WORK AS ONE, WE CAN
BECOME MATURE AND ATTAIN THE
FULLNESS OF CHRIST.

EQUIP THE SAINTS

• In Ephesians 4:12, there is a word katarizō in greek. This word is ordinarily translated as "equip" or "built up". It can also be translated as "mend what has been broken or rent" as in nets and even broken bones to perfectly join together, put in order, adjust, strengthen, perfect or complete and make one what one ought to be.

AFFIRMATION

• GOD LOVES ME SO MUCH THAT HE SACRIFICED HIS ONLY SON FOR ME. BECAUSE OF CHRIST, I AM ADOPTED INTO THE FAMILY OF GOD AND A PART OF THE BODY OF CHRIST. IN CHRIST, I BELONG, I AM SEEN, I AM VALUED, I AM A MASTERPIECE, I AM ONE OF A KIND. CHRIST HAS GIVEN ME SPIRITUAL GIFTS THAT WORK WITH THE BODY OF CHRIST TO DO GOOD WORKS. CHRIST EQUIPS ME USING HIS UNLIMITED RESOURCES. IN CHRIST I AM STRONG, I AM EQUIPPED, I AM QUALIFIED AND I WILL FULFILL THE PURPOSE HE HAS FOR MY LIFE FOR HIS GLORY!

APPENDIX G
OUTLINES FROM SESSIONS

**LOVE – Accepting all members of the body
and appreciating everyone's gift**

Ephesian 4 and 5

October 30, 2019

Assistant to Christian Education Department

1. Recognizing what God has done for us 2:1-16
 - a. God's work through Christ
 - b. Unity and peace in Christ – Our position in Christ

We know what it's like to not belong, we know what it's like to be on the outside.
2. Having gratitude for what God has done for us
 - a. Walking worthy of what God has done for us
 - i. With all lowliness and meekness
 - ii. Longsuffering
 - iii. Forbearing one another in love
 - iv. Endeavoring to keep the unity
3. unity of the Body
 - a. Exhortation 4:1-6
 - b. Different Gifts 4:7-10
 - c. Purpose of Gifts 4:11-16**
 - d. Disunity vs Unity 4:17-5.

**Nurturing: Learn and Develop Your Gift
Wednesday, November 6, 2019
Class Taught by Senior Pastor**

Text Ephesians 4:7-13

- I. Jesus Ascension to Heaven
- II. Jesus gave gifts to continue the work that He started on earth.
- III. It is important to Nurture your gifts
- IV. There must be a balance between spiritual growth and emotional growth.
 - a. Spiritual growth – You know it and you can share it.
 - b. Emotional growth – Can you live what you know and can share?
 - i. You are emotionally mature when you able to live right when you are under pressure.
- V. Pressure and difficult seasons are sometimes how God nurtures our gifts.
- VI. Allow God to nurture your gift
- VII. Definition of Nurturing
- VIII. Nurture through Maturity. (Are you growing?)
 - a. Maturing in your faith.
 - b. Maturing in your emotions.
- IX. Does your discipline match your calling?
- X. Maturity comes through obedience

- XI. If you starve for affirmation, then you are not ready for your assignment
- XII. Seasons of Frustration
 - a. Can you still stay faithful when you are in a season of frustration?
- XIII. Discipline people are patient people.
 - a. Patient with others and patient with self.
- XIV. Everything you go through; Failures and Successes are part of the journey.
- XV. Trust God in your journey.
- XVI. There some things you must grow into.
- XVII. God has given you to the gift, but you must realize it not about you. It is about serving.

APPENDIX H
CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION



New Beginnings
FELLOWSHIP CHURCH

CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION

Has successfully completed

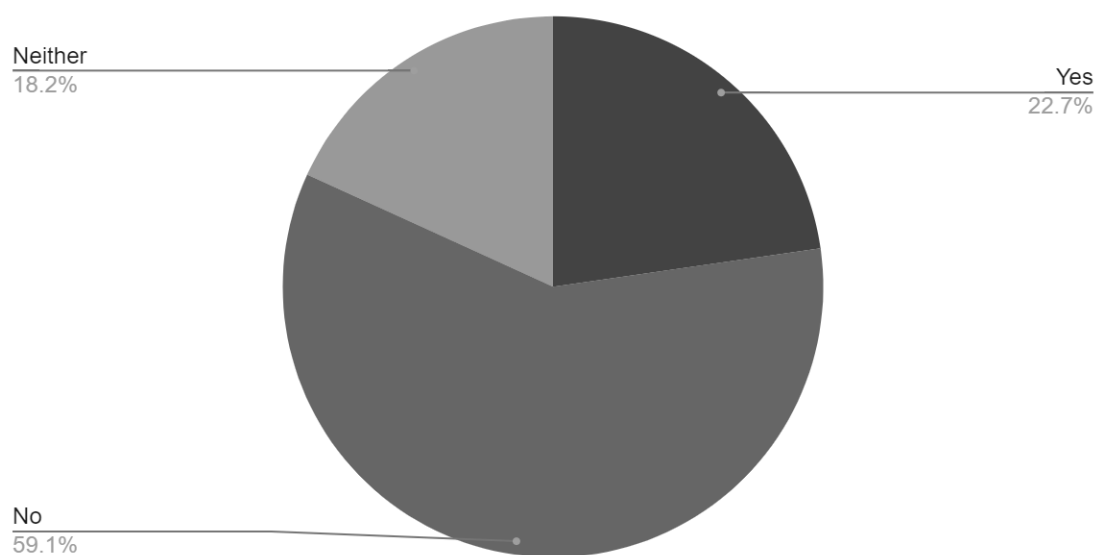
A SENSE OF BELONGING LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT STUDY
Ephesians 4:7-13

BY NEW BEGINNINGS FELLOWSHIP CHURCH
INDIANAPOLIS, IN
on the 10th day of November, 2019

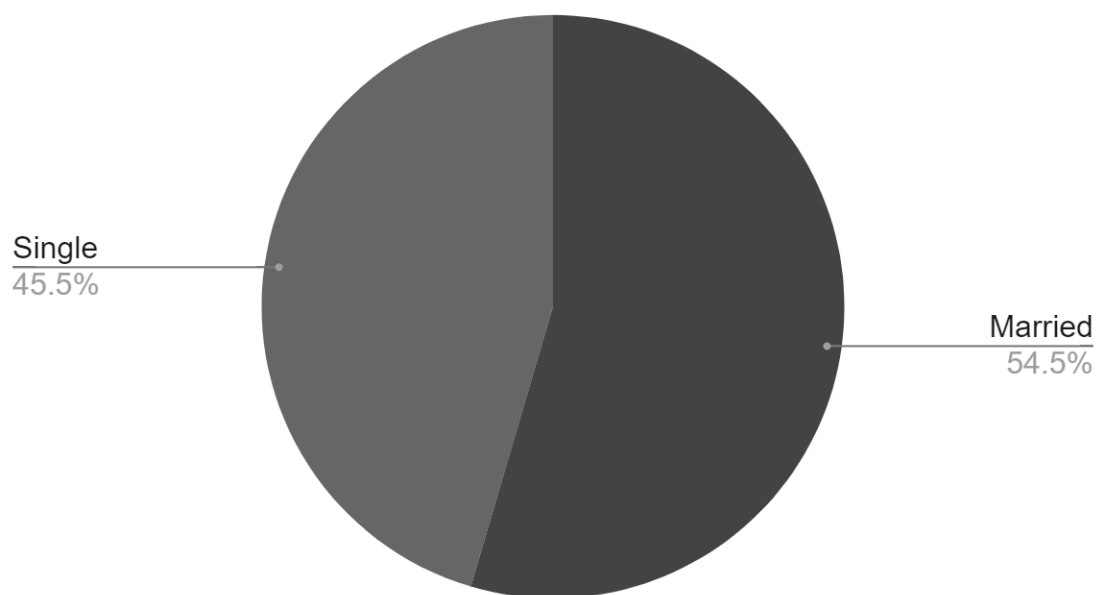
Alexia J. Ellis
Executive Pastor, New Beginnings Fellowship Church

APPENDIX I
CHARTS

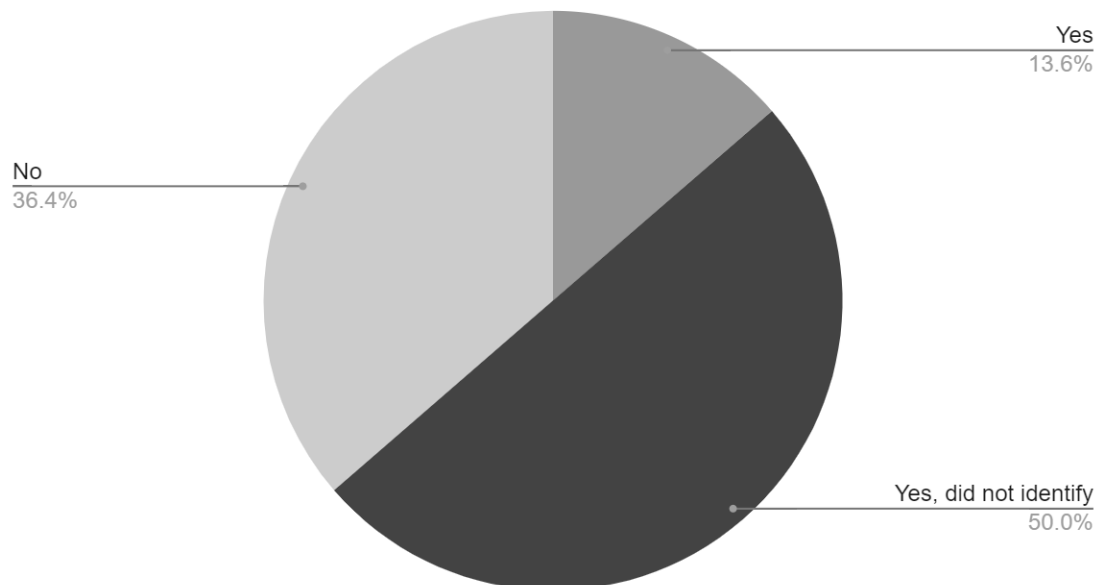
Do you feel that you are being used at your fullest potential at NBFC?



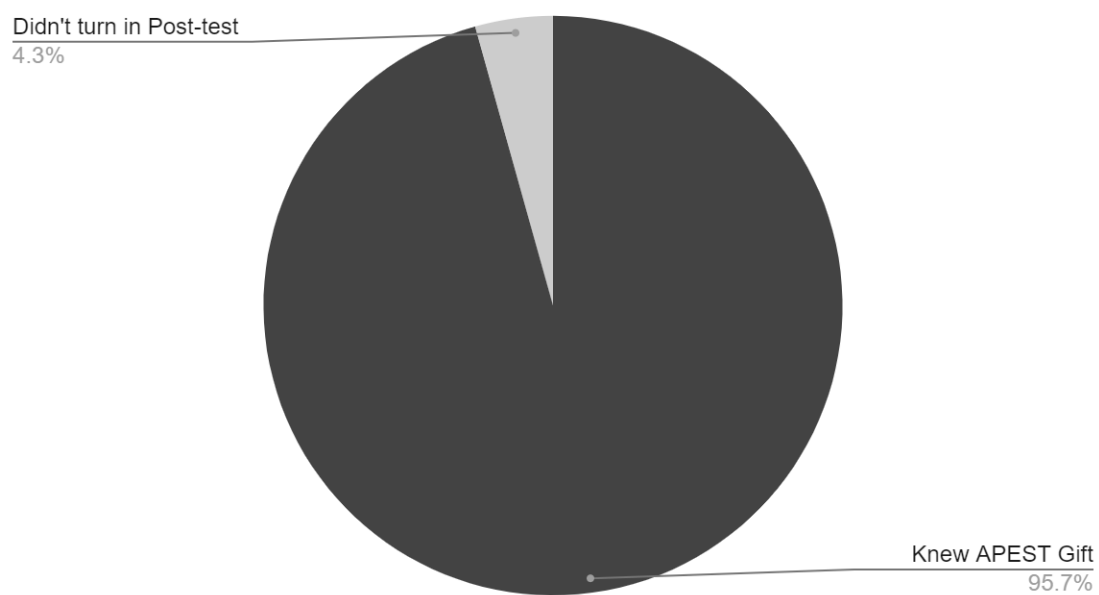
Marital Status



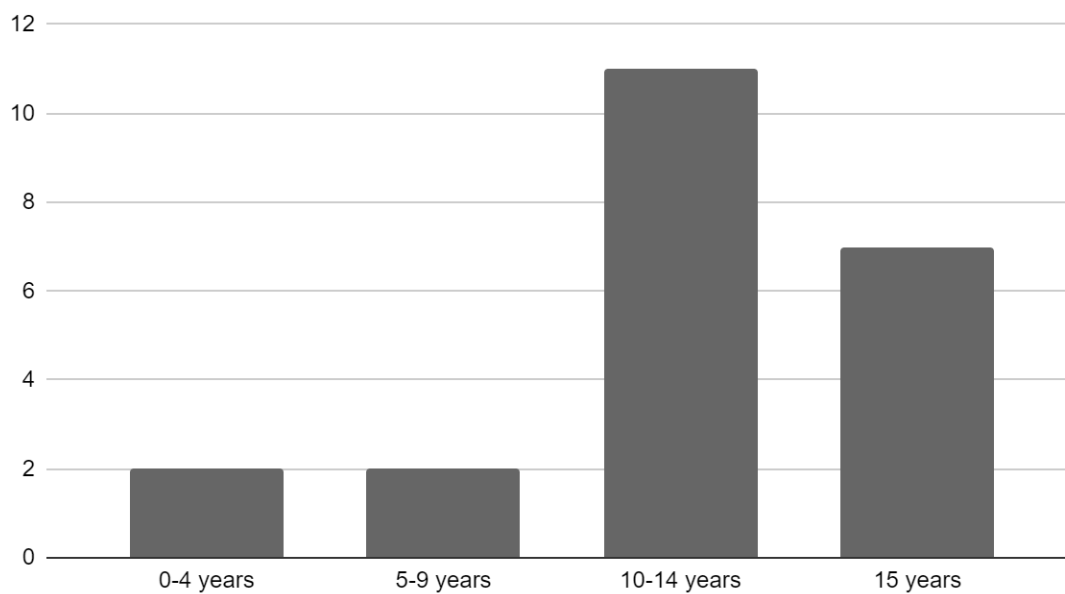
APEST GIFTING



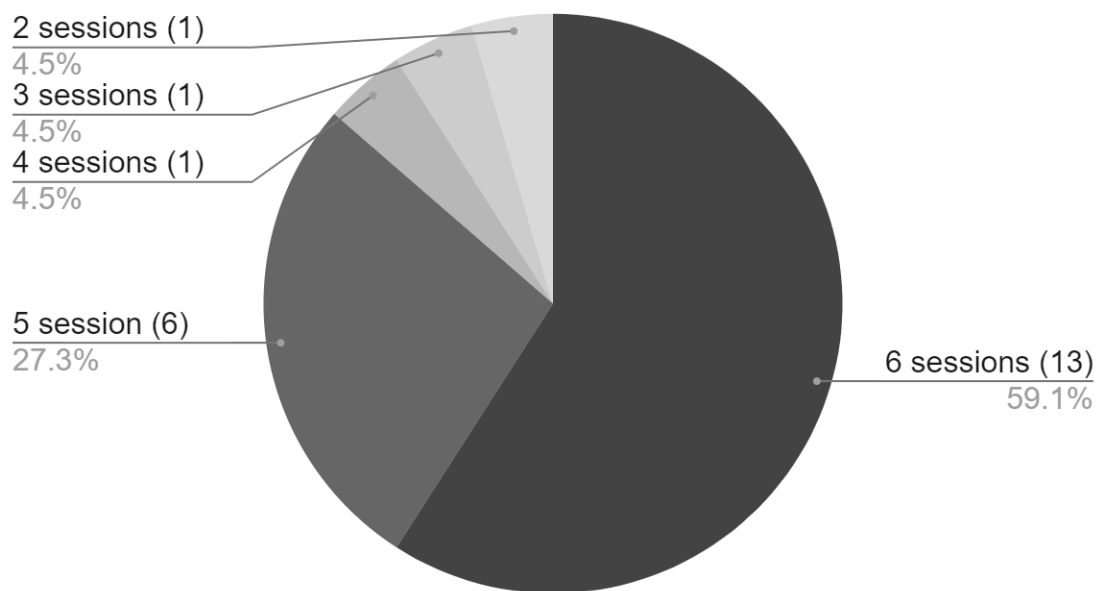
POST TEST - Could Identify APEST Gifting

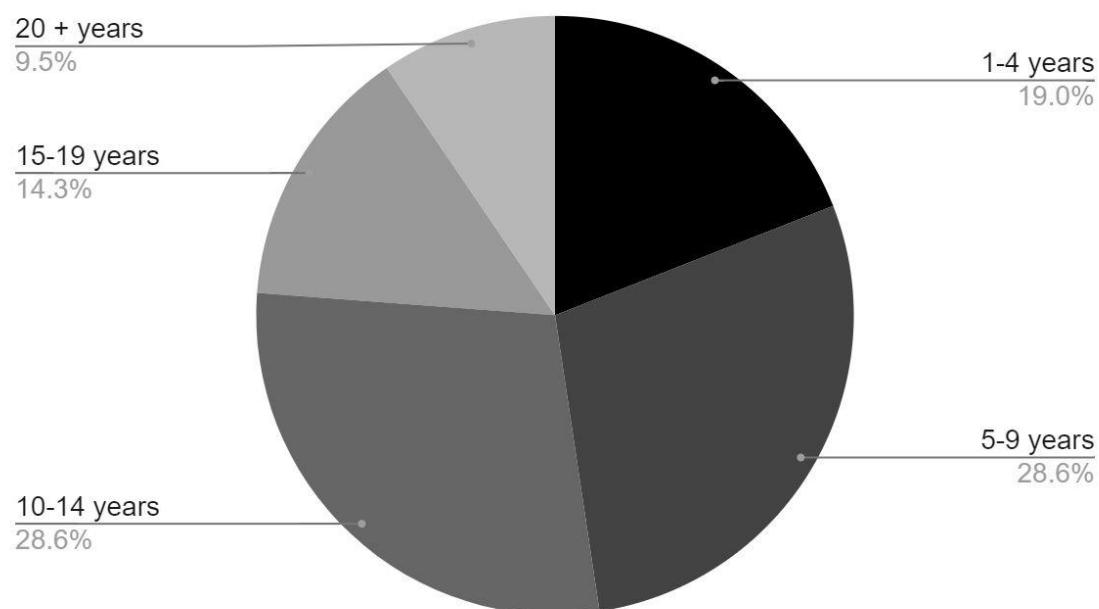
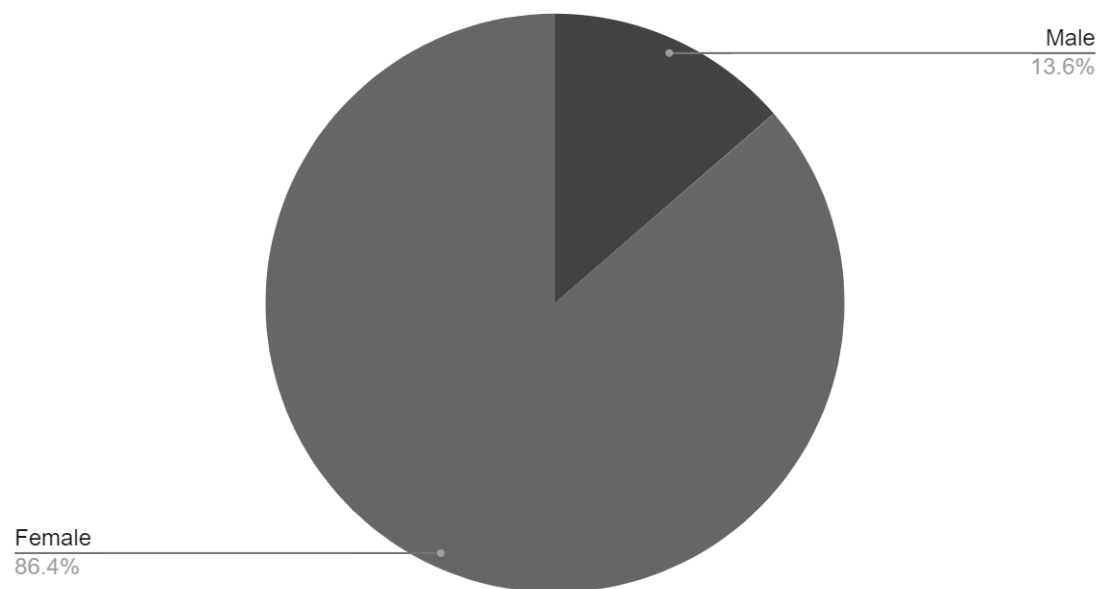


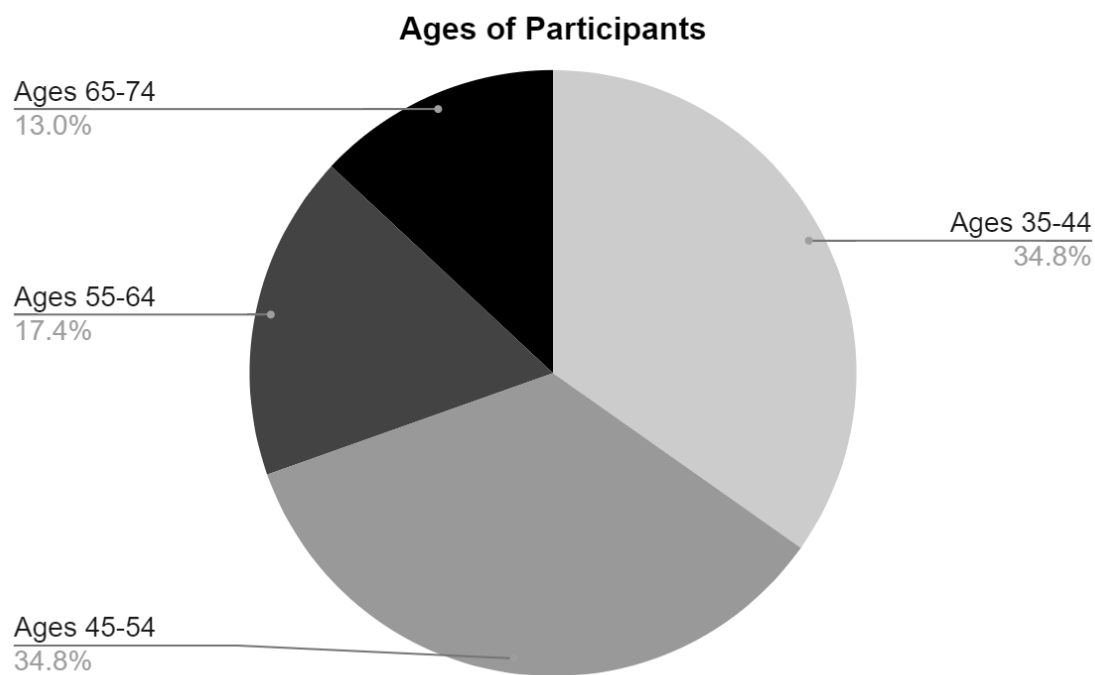
Length of Membership at NBFC



PROJECT ATTENDANCE



Number of Years in Ministry**Gender of Participants**



APPENDIX J
AFFIRMATION

GOD LOVES ME SO MUCH THAT HE SACRIFICED HIS ONLY SON FOR ME.
BECAUSE OF CHRIST, I AM ADOPTED INTO THE FAMILY OF GOD AND A
PART OF THE BODY OF CHRIST. IN CHRIST, I BELONG, I AM SEEN, I AM
VALUED, I AM A MASTERPIECE, I AM ONE OF A KIND. CHRIST HAS
GIVEN ME SPIRITUAL GIFTS THAT WORK WITH THE BODY OF CHRIST
TO DO GOOD WORKS. CHRIST EQUIPS ME USING HIS UNLIMITED
RESOURCES. IN CHRIST I AM STRONG, I AM EQUIPPED, I AM QUALIFIED
AND I WILL FULFILL THE PURPOSE HE HAS FOR MY LIFE FOR HIS
GLORY!

APPENDIX K
APEST ASSESSMENT INTRODUCTION

Alexia Ellis

APEST Assessment Introduction

APEST is a ministry assessment emerging from the most comprehensive statement of ministry structure, that of Ephesians 4:7,11-12. Within this passage we find the fivefold ministry of APEST: apostolic, prophetic, evangelist, shepherd and teacher; But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned It is he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be shepherd and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up.

AESPT

Apostolic	35
Evangelistic	28
Shepherding	24
Prophetic	22
Teaching	15



All five ministries are needed to engender, call forth, and sustain a full ministry in the Jesus movement. In fact, all five ministries in dynamic relation to one another are absolutely essential to vigorous discipleship, healthy churches and growing movements. Ephesians 4:7,11-12 assigns APEST ministries to the entire church, not just leadership. All followers of Jesus are to be found somewhere in APEST, living out their nature characterized by a servant-inspired dynamic.

Understanding how your 'Primary', 'Secondary', and 'Supplementary' capacities work together

The APEST profile test helps you identify your 'primary/secondary' and 'supplementary' capacities. Think of these like your right and your left hand. Your 'primary' capacities will feature 2 of the APEST. We call this your APEST couplet. These two capacities work together in a special way. The first one is your paradigm or lens through which you see the world. These are usually the ideas that you are drawn to and motivate you. For many people this one is a surprise! Many people are also under-developed in this area, which is why we have created resources for you at www.5Qcentral.com Your 'secondary' capacity is usually the voice through which you speak to others. This is how people hear you. It is also usually the language you receive the best – your love language if you will. Many people mistakenly think this is their main capacity. Read the description below to see how your two work together.

Your 'supplementary' capacities are not your main ones, but just like you are better with both hands, you are more like Jesus with some of all 5 capacities. Low-development in your 'supplementary' capacities will limit the strength and maturity of your 'primary/secondary' capacities. Read those descriptions and embrace opportunities for God to grow you to look more like Jesus.

Profile for Apostolic + Evangelistic

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The Apostle Evangelist's impact on others comes through their comprehensive view of the Kingdom and can apply this knowledge both to individuals as well as through the organization. They can extend Jesus' mission both broadly (A) as well as appeal to individuals in their orbit (E). The mature AE makes for a very compelling leader as they have real drive as well as the ability to recruit people in their big sense of cause. The AE has a sense of strategic combined with clarity of vision but can communicate these in an engaging way. As a risk-taker and innovator, they provide an ideal profile for a movement-maker, church planter, or an entrepreneur. The ultimate motivation of the Apostle Evangelist is to extend Kingdom impact through organizational and individual alignment to Jesus and the Gospel.

Primary: Apostolic: 35

An apostolic individual would likely express all the functions listed below, but a mature expression of the apostolic will embody many in an exemplary way.

In the power of the Holy Spirit, the apostolic person is imbued with an innate sense of the big-picture purpose of the organization. In its mature, idealized leadership form, the apostle (sent one) is the person most responsible for the overall vigor, as well as extension, of Christianity as a whole, primarily through direct mission and church planting.

Not surprisingly, apostolic types tend to favor the entrepreneurial edges of the church and have a natural capacity for adventure; they tend to be less risk-averse than those who fall under other forms of ministry and leadership. Following this pioneering instinct, they are the ones most likely to engage at the edges of the organization, to innovate, and to extend the faith into new ground. They therefore provide the "catalytic, adaptive, movemental, translocal, pioneering, entrepreneurial leadership needed to spark, mobilize, and sustain movement(s)."

Apostles have an irreplaceable purpose in maintaining ongoing missional capacities, generating new forms of ecclesia, and working for the continual renewal of the church/organization.

The mature apostle will tend to have a more developed sense of the church/ organization as a living system comprised of essential parts, or subsystems. This involves being the developer and custodian of the meta-ideas (DNA) that determine the health of the system. Because of this they can play a vital role in the design and the leadership and health of organizations.

Luke 10:1-3

"After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them two by two ahead of him to every town and place where he was about to go. He told them, 'The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field. Go! I am sending you out like lambs among wolves.' "

1 Corinthians 3:5-9,11

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"What, after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul? Only servants, through whom you came to believe—as the Lord has assigned to each his task. I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow. So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow. The man who plants and the man who waters have one purpose, and each will be rewarded according to his own labor. For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, God's building. [...] For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ."

Characteristics

- Visionary thinking and motivation
- Comfortable crossing boundaries - intellectual, social or cultural
- Entrepreneurial interests to build communities of faith
- Starting something new is energizing
- Pioneering new endeavors
- Strategic decision maker
- Innovative approaches and solutions
- Uncomfortable with the status quo
- See things holistically, part of larger system
- Understands multiple dynamics and components
- Deep relationships at a distance, in outside networks
- Need to move occasionally to pursue a new thing

Functions

- Seeding the DNA of the church through mission and works that extend the movement
- Maintaining an abiding commitment of sentness (mission) throughout the organization
- Extending the missionary impact of the church
- Maintaining compliancy around core ideas and culture (DNA)
- Networking translocally
- Maintaining paradigm and vision
- Maintaining a strategic commitment to church planting strategy and pioneering leadership
- Ensuring organizational agility, adaptability, and scalability
- Mobilizing leaders, resources, and churches
- Maintaining a sense of the big picture which makes sense of the small issues
- Priming the organization for innovation an entrepreneurship
- Developing capacities for appropriaterisk-taking (develop "anti-fragile" organization)

Blind Spots (Watch out for these expressions of immaturity)

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Dysfunctional Apostle

- Dogmatic about vision
- Autocratic and domineering
- Seeks to use bullying to control
- Ignores or disassociates with those “who don’t get it”
- Lacks empathy
- Becomes bored quickly
- Gets disillusioned when not seeing quick results
- Can be impatient
- Sees people as a means to an end
- Struggles with accountability

Impact: Extension, the one who is sent

- Cast vision to those around you. Do not be afraid to let your passion and excitement ignite others' lives. Listen to the questions and comments of others. Often, these elements will identify details needing to be integrated into your message, providing greater clarity. Do not fear over-explaining why certain people, organizations and resources are necessary to stabilize the vision.
- Those nearest to you are likely to have an apostolic or prophetic mindset. Ask them to help explain and provide strategy for the vision. They are unlikely to know how to accomplish the vision. Allow them to inspire others toward understanding. Recruit and release other like-minded individuals to seed the vision within the structure of the movement.
- What you see as needed to further a missional cause may not be immediately seen by those near you. Envision within the local church, explaining themes for annual meetings, events, financial campaigns, and individuals. Depending on your mindset, some apostolic leaders serve best by inspiring people one at a time or to large groups.

Secondary: Evangelistic: 28

The whole church, in fact all Christians, are to be involved in extending the message of the church. But some are called to embody and exemplify evangelism in the community. These are the evangelists. Evangelists are exceptional recruiters. The most obvious outcome of the ministry of evangelists is that people are enlisted to the cause of Christ. In other words, the church grows. Evangelists have the capacity to get significant buy-in from their hearers. They are persuasive, infectious people with appealing personalities. In terms of the diffusion of ideas and the spread of movements, they are the persuaders—people with significant negotiation skills. They tend to have an indefinable trait that goes beyond what they say and makes others want to agree with them. For this reason, evangelists are agents of conversion.

Evangelists tend to be great social connectors—the kind of people who can link the rest of us up with the world: “They have a special gift for bringing the world together,” as Malcolm Gladwell puts it. They have a

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capacity to make connections with people in a way that demonstrates social as well as emotional intelligence. In many ways, their function is therefore genuinely priestly, in that they mediate between God and people as well as between people and people. Evangelists also have an affinity for the gospel that makes them adept at applying it to people's unique experience and circumstance. They really are positive, good news people. The sharing of good news is an inextricable part of their capacity to understand people and make connections. Not only do they have strong relational affinity, they also have a great capacity to translate the gospel into the prevailing culture in ways that make a lot of sense. This too is an intrinsic aspect of priestly ministry: mediating the knowledge of God, sharing good news, and inviting people to join the story.

Outside the organized faith community, evangelists tend to be entrepreneurs, excellent communicators, motivators, marketers, and enthusiastic storytellers.

Luke 19:9-10

"Jesus said to him, 'Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost' "

Romans 10:14-15

"How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, 'How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!'"

Characteristics

- Recruits for a cause
- Makes clear the message of salvation
- Communicates passionately
- Message of organizational purpose
- Needs others to hear and respond
- Creates genuine, organic growth in people
- Core issue is conversion, coming to faith
- Naturally enthusiastic, enthusiasm can be contagious
- A perspective that sees people as souls needing faith
- Can personalize and contextualize the message of God's love
- Motivated to see people move toward Christ
- Needs response from people, leads to belief and belonging

Functions

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- Developing an invitational and welcoming culture (enhancing attractational capacities)
- Proclaiming the core messages of the organization/church
- Championing cultural relevance of organization and message to primary audience
- Developing the stickiness and simplicity of the core message
- Entrepreneurial
- Ensuring Evangel(ical) theology and ethos
- Maintaining cultural relevance
- Developing evangelistic leadership and ministers
- Maintaining connections with outsiders
- Maintaining positive, life-affirming and redemptive "vibe" in the community
- Developing evangelistic culture

Blind Spots (Watch out for these expressions of immaturity)

The Dysfunctional Evangelist

- Insecure; unhealthy need of affirmation
- Lack of deep, substantive relationships
- Pragmatism (if it works it must be right)
- Resentful or neglectful of those inside the church
- Nit-picky about language
- Does not complete ideas or plans
- Weak spiritual disciplines
- Short-term gain over long-term impact
- Mistakes decisions for discipleship
- Numbers-driven
- Driven by novelty and the "new"

Impact: Expansion, the one who recruits

- You believe the community of faith is a place where people need to belong. This belonging is achieved through a believing relationship with Jesus Christ. Establish meaningful relationships and a genuine commitment to the people of your community; this will develop a trust to support the work you are called to do.
- Once people respond to the call of God, help them integrate into the community. Because you ultimately care about their belonging, introduce them to people who will welcome them, so they feel a sense of home and belonging. This will help others see your connection to the mission of the church.
- As the gatekeeper of the church, you may be seen as more welcoming and accommodating than others. Your openness to new people, diversity and differences in cultural nuances may be seen as threatening. Take time to explain how God's love is expressed to people from all backgrounds.

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Supplemental 1: Shepherding: 24

Definition

The *shepherd/shepherding* is the function and calling responsible for maintaining and developing healthy community and enriching relationships. This involves a commitment to form a saintly people, nurture spiritual maturity, maintain communal health, defend the community against breakdown, and engender loving community among the redeemed family of God.

John 13:34-35

" 'A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.' "

Impact: Nurture - the one who cares.

- You have the unique ability to provide a comfortable space for people, a trusting relationship ripe for their personal and spiritual growth. Seek places to serve as a counselor, discipler, care giver or role model. Be aware of the possibility that co-dependency may occur between you and those you are leading.

Supplemental 2: Prophetic: 22

Definition

The *prophet/prophetic* is the function tasked with maintaining an abiding loyalty and faithfulness to God above all. Essentially, prophets are guardians of the covenant relationship that God has with his people. The prophetic is also passionately concerned with living a life morally consistent with the covenant—a simple and authentic life of justice, holiness, and righteousness. The prophet proclaims God's holiness and calls for a corresponding holiness in his covenanted people (1 Peter 1:16).

John 1:6-8

"There came a man who was sent from God; his name was John. He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all men might believe. He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light. "

James 1:21-24

"Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you. Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.

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Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror; for they look at themselves and, on going away, immediately forget what they look like."

Impact: Integration, the one who knows.

- You have great faith in what you believe, explain these beliefs with others. Your precise knowledge of what God calls us to do will encourage and assure people who naturally question or are indecisive. This encouragement and assurance leads others to confidence, faithfulness, obedience and influence.

Supplemental 3: Teaching: 15

Definition

The teacher/teaching is concerned with the mediation and appropriation of wisdom and understanding. This is the naturally philosophical type that brings comprehensive understanding of the revelation bequeathed to the church. It is a guiding and discerning function. In the biblical tradition, emphasis falls on wisdom and not simply on speculative philosophy. Teaching, of course, also involves integrating the intellectual and spiritual treasure of the community and encoding it, in order to pass it on to others and to the next generations (paradosis, or tradition).

Matthew 7:28-29

"When Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were amazed at his teaching, because he taught as one who had authority, and not as their teachers of the law."

Impact: Understanding - the one who explains.

- You have a keen understanding of what God is communicating to His people; ask to be involved in areas of teaching, small groups facilitation or writing curriculum. Your expanded understanding of common lessons and beliefs will provide meaningful application for others.

How Does APEST Compare?

Apostolic	Prophetic	Evangelistic	Shepherding	Teaching
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	Apostolic	Prophetic	Evangelistic	Shepherding	Teaching
Theological roots in God	Father, creator, sender (missio Dei), Sovereign, Designer, Judge, Source	Holy, faithful, incarnate, transcendent, covenantal, just and true, omnipotent	Savior, redeemer, gracious giver, lover, merciful	Community in the Trinity, comforter, immanent, intimate, knower (yada), divine parent, compassionate	Omniscient, prescient, truth, wisdom, beauty, Logos (reason)
Core vocation	Custodian of the DNA Pioneer Entrepreneur Architect	Guardian of the covenant Questioner of the status quo	Connector to the cause Recruiter Entrepreneur	Nurturer Humanizer Sustainer Social integrator	Mediator of wisdom and understanding Trainer-educator Theological formation
Impulse Effect	Missional Propagate	Incarnational Incarnate	Attractional Aggregate	Communal Integrate	Instructional Explicate
Focus	A viable future and expansion of the Christian movement	God orientation: Keeping the movement aligned with God	That people come to know Jesus and join the movement	The community living healthily in the love of the triune God	Awareness and integration of truth, especially revealed truth
Spirituality-character complex	Adventurous and futuristic Has an architectural/systemic sensibility, with an emphasis on risk	Transcendent and existential Has a strong intuition of what is right and wrong, emphasizing integrity, obedience, and mystery	Relational and communal Emphasis on novelty, sociality, playfulness, and celebration	Nurturing and communal, with an emphasis on healing, wholeness, and community	Intellectual and philosophical, with an emphasis on curiosity, learning, knowledge, and the intellect
Leadership style	Decisive Design focused Strategic	Demonstrative Motivational	Persuasive Motivational	Inclusive Collaborative	Prescriptive Analytical
Emphasis in disciple-making	scalable and reproducible, discipling someone as they disciple someone else, discipleship systems	Hearing the revelatory word (rhema) of God, prayer, and obedience to the voice of God	Doing what Jesus did, being good news, and exemplifying Christlikeness to others	Inner healing, healthy community life, and relational reconciliation	Assimilating the logos word of God and through the reading/understanding of scripture

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	Apostolic	Prophetic	Evangelistic	Shepherding	Teaching
Overriding concerns	Will this help us increase our capacity for mission?	Will this help us embody God's concerns?	Will this help us bring people to a point of conversion?	How will this affect the organization and people in the community?	How will this line up with theology and scripture?
Metrics for success	Healthy and systematic extension of Christianity within and beyond cultural boundaries Kingdom multiplication	Faithfulness to God's values through visible and tangible actions and consciousness of God's character and presence	Growth through individual and group conversion and in increasing the number of adherents in the movement	People's experience of a sense of belonging, intimacy, and personal transformation	Adequate engagement with, comprehension of, and consistency with truth in all its forms
How it contributes to the health of the movement	Ensuring consistency with core ideas Laying new foundations and designing systems around mobilization and extension	Anchoring the movement in God's values and providing critical feedback for constant realignment	Explicitly valuing the Gospel as our core story Adding new people Sharing the message in the local vernacular	Cultivating and integrating people into a socially cohesive community that fosters relational health and harmony	Systematizing and articulating the multi-dimensional aspects of truth Optimizing operational efficiency Building systems of discipleship

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	Apostolic	Prophetic	Evangelistic	Shepherding	Teaching
Blindspots and shadows	Dominance: task-focussed, demanding, and insensitive to others. Immaturity A's can succumb to being controlling and this can lead to burnout--personal and corporate.	Disrespectful: Passionate can become ideological and demanding. Laser-set on truth can become short-sighted, and simplistic. A call to conviction can become critical and condemning	Driven: Anything to make the deal, not demanding enough, mistakes "being involved" for equipping or discipleship	Drowning: Obsessive need for harmony, aversion to risk or conflict, and may take on too many people's problems	Dogmatism: Demand for ideology conformity and lack of urgency, can be overly critical over certain areas and may choose being 'right' over relationships
Historical Exemplars	Jesus, Peter, Paul, St. Patrick, Joan of Arc, John Wesley, Aimee Semple McPherson,	Jesus, Jeremiah, St. Benedict, Martin Luther, St. Theresa of Avila, Ida B. Robinson, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Martin Luther King Jr.	Jesus, Phillip, George Whitfield, Kathryn Kuhlman, Billy Graham, Rick Warren, Carletha CeCe Cole	Jesus, St. Francis, Jean Vanier, Mother Theresa, Eugene Peterson	Jesus, Apollos, Augustine, Aquinas, John Calvin, Henry Nouwen, Beth Moore, Priscilla Shirer

What Does the Church Look Like without the Complete APEST?

Dysfunctional APEST

A (No PEST)

If an apostolic leader dominates, the church or other organization will tend to be hard-driving, autocratic, with lots of pressure for change and development, and will leave lots of wounded people in its wake. It is not sustainable and will tend to dissolve with time.

P (No AEST)

If the prophetic leaders dominates, the organization will be one-dimensional (always harking back to one or two issues), will likely be factious and sectarian, will have a "super-spiritual" vibe, or, somewhat paradoxically, will tend to be either too activist to be sustainable or too quietist to be useful. This is not a viable form of organization.

E (No APST)

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When an evangelistic leader dominates, the organization will have an obsession with numerical growth, will create dependence on effervescent charismatic leadership, and will tend to lack theological breadth and depth. This type of organization will not empower many people.

S (No APET)

When pastoral leadership monopolizes, the church or other organization will tend to be risk averse, codependent and needy, and overly lacking in healthy dissent and therefore creativity. Such an organization will lack innovation and generativity and will not be able to transfer its core message and tasks from one generation to the next.

T (No APES)

When teachers and theologians rule, the church will be ideological, controlling, moralistic, and somewhat uptight. A rationalistic, doctrine-obsessed, Christian gnosticism (the idea that we are saved by what we know) will tend to replace reliance on the Holy Spirit. These types of organization will be exclusive based on ideology like that of the pharisees.

Resources for Further Exploration

For more resources on APEST, check out the following:

Books by Alan Hirsch and others:

- The Permanent Revolution
- The Permanent Revolution Handbook
- 5Q
- Activating 5Q: A User's Guide

Other Recommended Books:

- Primal Fire by Neil Col

Training Modules offered by 5Qcentral.com

- AQ
- PQ
- EQ
- SQ
- TQ
- APEST
- 5Q

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